

COMPLETE NOVELETTE AND MANY SHORT STORIES } APRIL, 1913
15 CENTS

AINSLIE'S

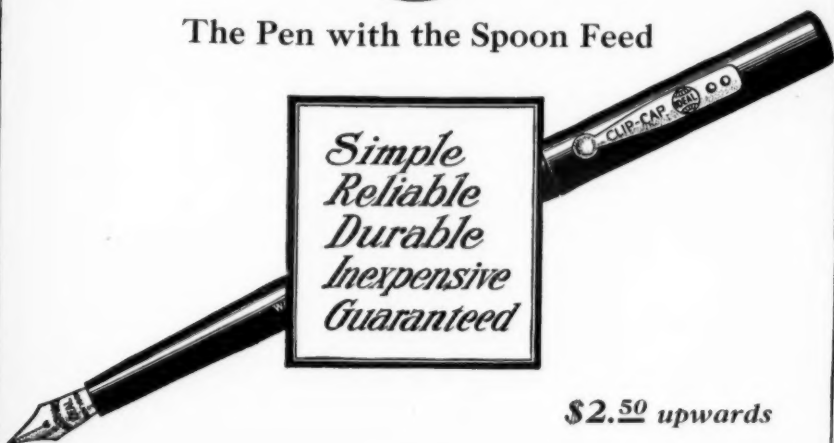
THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS



Illustration by Charles Christy

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

The Pen with the Spoon Feed



\$2.50 upwards

MANY people visit the extensive Waterman's Ideal factories. There are no other institutions like them anywhere. The fact that they are a revelation is found in the almost unanimous expression "Who would have thought it?" Few there are who know or have surmised the thought, ingenuity, and care that is constantly spent by us in providing, to the polyglot nations of the world, that small but eminently useful article **Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen.**

There are 210 distinct and separate operations in the making of every Waterman's Ideal. This covers the conversion of South America's best Para rubber and North America's purest gold into the perfect pen. In each operation every employee is keyed to the ultimate view-point of producing fountain pens that will write with perfect ease and evenness, be entirely ink tight and safe, strong, lasting and fine appearing. It is our continuous aim to please the individual writer.

In Regular, Safety and Self Filling Types

Booklet on request.

Avoid substitutes.

Ask for Waterman's Ideals—at the Best Stores Everywhere.

L. E. Waterman Company, 173 Broadway, New York.

24 School Street, Boston,
Montreal, P. Q.,

115 So. Clark Street, Chicago,
Kingsway, London,

17 Stockton Street, San Francisco,
8 Rue d'Hanovre, Paris.



Victor-Victrola XVI, \$200
Mahogany or quartered oak

Other styles of the
Victor-Victrola, \$15 to \$150
Victors, \$10 to \$100

If the Victor-Victrola did nothing but bring to you the soul-stirring arias and concerted numbers of opera, beautifully rendered by the world's greatest artists, that alone would make it a treasured addition to your home.

But besides the compositions of the great masters, the Victor-Victrola brings into your home a wonderful variety of music and mirth, that satisfies alike the longing for musical harmonies and the taste for sheer entertainment.

And as you sit and enjoy all these musical riches, you will marvel at the varied accomplishments of the Victor-Victrola and thoroughly appreciate its value as a companion and entertainer—a treasured possession in your home.

Any Victor dealer in any city in the world will gladly demonstrate the Victor-Victrola to you and play any music you wish to hear.

Victor Talking Machine Co., Camden, N. J., U. S. A.

Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors

Always use Victor Machines with Victor Records and Victor Needles—the combination. There is no other way to get the unequalled Victor tone.

Victor Steel Needles, 6 cents per 100

Victor Fibre Needles, 50 cents per 100 (can be repointed and used eight times)

Victor-Victrola



New Victor Records are on sale at all dealers on the 28th of each month

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

"As full of spirit as the month of May."
—King Henry IV.

The May Ainslee's

¶ In addition to a complete novelette and a dozen unusual short stories by such writers as Mary Heaton Vorse, Edgar Saltus, Alma Martin Estabrook, Herman Whitaker, J. J. Bell (the "Wee Macgregor" man), and George Weston, the May number of AINSLEE'S will contain a characteristically brilliant shower of sparks from the pen of

George Bernard Shaw

¶ He has labeled this latest, "Causerie on Handel in England," but he incidentally pays his disrespects to many things.

¶ You will find this noteworthy number of "the magazine that entertains" on the stands April 15th. It might be well to order from your news dealer now.

Ainslee's for May

The New **EXCELSIOR** Telescope \$1.00 ONLY

Including Solar Eye Piece—Sixty Day Special Sale



HERE'S a bargain. Never before has it been possible to obtain a telescope with solar eye piece attachment for less than \$8 to \$10. But because we bought up the stock of one of the largest European manufacturers in lenses, we are enabled to sell you this outfit for \$1. Think of it—the solar eye piece alone is worth more than that amount in the pleasure it gives—seeing the sun spots as they appear, and inspecting solar eclipses.



The small illustration at the top shows the telescope all focused with solar eye piece on all ready to look at the sun. The large illustration shows the telescope nearly closed and cut open to show where the powerful lenses are located, the diaphragm and general construction. Figures 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in illustration represent the sliding tubes, and figures 6 and 7 the inner tubes which hold the three smaller lenses and diaphragm in place, and are fitted into tube 5. It is a wonderful piece of work to get for \$1.00. Section 5 or the small end slide can be used separately from the rest of the telescope, as a microscope.

The Excelsior Telescope has a multiplicity of uses—its pleasure is never dimmed—each day discovers some new delight. Distinguish faces blocks away. Read signs invisible to the naked eye. Use it in cases of emergency.

Take the Excelsior Telescope with you on pleasure and vacation trips, and you can take in all the scenery at a glance—ships miles out; mountains encircled by vapors; bathers in the surf; tourists climbing up the winding paths.

Used as a microscope it is found of infinite value in discovering microbes and germs in plants and seeds, etc.

For certain classes of outdoor workers the Excelsior Telescope is a positive necessity. Who knows but that some time it may prove a source of aid that will repay its cost many times over?

For Lack of a Spy-Glass

the \$10,000,000 Titanic and 1,600 lives were lost. What are you losing for want of a telescope or spy-glass?

The Excelsior Telescope is mechanically correct—bound in brass, brass safety cap to exclude dust. Powerful lenses, scientifically ground and adjusted. Handy to carry—will go in pocket when closed, but when opened is

Over 3 1/2 Feet Long

Circumference 5 1/4 inches. Heretofore telescopes of this size have sold for not less than \$5 to \$8.

F. S. Patton, Arkansas City, Kansas, writes: "Can count cattle nearly 20 miles; can see large ranch 17 miles east, and can tell colors and count windows in house."
L. S. Henry, The Saxon, New York, writes: "Your solar eye piece is a great thing. I witnessed the eclipse at the Austrian Tyrol when the sun was almost 80 per cent concealed."

COULD SEE SUN SPOTS.

Rutland, Vt., Feb. 10th, 1910. Telescope arrived O. K. I have seen the spots on the sun for the first time in my life.

—Dan C. Safford.

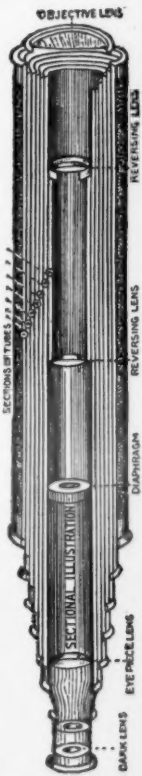
PRICE \$1.00. BY PARCEL POST INSURED \$1.18

This Bargain is for 60 Days

Send money in registered letter, Post Office Order or bank draft payable to our order. Absolute guarantee of satisfaction or money refunded. Do it NOW.

Our New Catalogue of Guns Is Sent With Each Order

KIRTLAND BROS. & CO., Dept. A. 1. 96 CHAMBERS ST. NEW YORK



Know the Heavens!

This diagram shows you how to find the North Star (Polaris). In 1910, there will be three eclipses of the sun and two of the moon. View them through an Excelsior Telescope. On request we will send dates of eclipses and where they are visible.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING SECTION

Rate, \$1.00 a line, or \$2.61 1/4 a line, which includes POPULAR and SMITH'S Magazines, making a total of 4,000,000 readers—the cheapest and best Classified Advertising medium on the market. Next issue of AINSLEE'S closes March 29th.

Agents & Help Wanted

AGENTS—Handkerchiefs, Dress Goods, Carlton made \$8.00 one afternoon; Mrs. Bosworth \$25.00 in two days. Free Samples, Credit. Stamp brings particulars. Freeport Mfg. Company, 45 Main St., Brooklyn, N.Y.

AGENTS—Either sex, sell our guaranteed hosiery. Whole or part time. 70 per cent profit. Goods replaced free if hole appears. Experience unnecessary. Quaker Knit, 26 So. 31st Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

AGENTS. Portraits 35c. Frames 15c, sheet pictures 1c, stereoscopes 25c, views 1c. 30 days' credit. Samples & Catalog Free. Consolidated Portrait, Dept. 1146, 1027 W. Adams St., Chicago.

AGENTS earn from \$3.00 to \$9.00 a day selling scientifically Tempered Knives and Razors with photo handles. We show you how to make money. Write today for special outfit offer. Canton Cutlery Co. Dept. 210, Canton, O.

\$1000.00 earned by three people in 30 days selling our Fire Extinguishers. 500% profit. Protected territory. United Mfg. Co., 1007 Jefferson, Toledo, O.

AGENTS MAKE BIG MONEY and become sales managers for our goods. Fast office sellers. Fine profits. Particulars and sample free. One Dip Pen Company, Dept. 9, Baltimore, Md.

YOUNG MAN, would you accept and wear a fine tailor-made suit just for showing it to your friends? Or a slip-on Raincoat Free! Could you use \$5 a day for a little spare time? Perhaps we can offer you a steady job! If you live in a town smaller than 10,000, write at once and get beautiful samples, styles and this wonderful offer. Banner Tailoring Company, Dept. 30, Chicago.

I MADE \$50,000 in five years with a small mail order business. Began with \$5. Send for free booklet. Tells how. Heacock, 5291 Lockport, N. Y.

Hosiery manufacturer wants agents to sell established guaranteed line direct to consumer. Big commission. Exclusive territory. Credit. F. Parker Mills, 720 Chestnut St., Phila., Pa.

MEN and Women Wanted for Government Parcels Post Positions. \$90.00 month. Write for vacancy list. Franklin Institute, Dept. L6, Rochester, N.Y.

BE A DETECTIVE: Big wages. See the world. Write Detective Johnson, Department 28, Houseman Bldg., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Agents and Help Wanted—Continued.

FREE ILLUSTRATED BOOK tells about over 300,000 protected positions in U. S. service. More than 40,000 vacancies every year. There is a big chance here for you, sure and generous pay, lifetime employment. Easy to get. Just ask for booklet A-25. No obligation. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

BIG MONEY WRITING SONGS.—We pay hundreds of dollars a year to successful writers. Experience unnecessary. Song poems wanted with or without music—will pay one-half of profits if successful. Send us your work today. Acceptance Guaranteed if Available. Largest concern in the country. Free particulars. Dugdale Co., Dept. 256, Washington, D. C.

SOAP AGENTS MAKE MORE MONEY SELLING The Celebrated Liniro line. Coffee, flavorings, spices, soaps, perfumes, and 155 other items. Big Commissions to you—Exclusive territory—Freight allowed. Handsome premiums to your customers. Free Sample Case. No deposit required. Free catalog. Liniro Company, 14 Liniro Building, St. Louis, Mo.

AGENTS—WOULD YOU TAKE A STEADY JOB where you can make \$30 weekly and chance to work up to district manager with yearly profits of \$5,000 or more. No experience required. My goods are snappy self-sellers that make and hold customers. Need fifty more agents now. If you want to make big money quick, write today. E. M. Davis, 1080 Davis Block, Chicago.

BE A DETECTIVE—Earn \$150 to \$300 per month; travel over world. Stamp for particulars. National Detective Agency, Dept. R 12, Chicago.

WANTED—AMBITIOUS People to prepare at home and succeed as Stenographers, Bookkeepers, Real Estate Agents, Salesmen or Lawyers. Free booklet, tells how. State preference, American Education Ass'n, San Fran.

AGENTS and salesmen will secure Free, complete information of numerous money-making selling propositions and newest specialties in hands of responsible concerns by addressing Distributor, R14, 26 Cedar St., N. Y.

Games & Entertainment

PLAYS, Vaudeville Sketches, Monologues, Dialogues, Speakers, Minstrel Material, Jokes, Recitations, Tableaux, Drills, Entertainments. Make Up Goods. Large Catalog Free. T. S. Denison & Co., Dept. 19, Chicago

Business Opportunities

BUILD a \$5000 Business in Two Years. Let us start you in the collection business. No capital needed; big field. We teach secrets of collecting money; refer business to you. Write today for Free Pointers and new plan. American Collection Service, 19 State Street, Detroit, Mich.

Coins, Stamps, Etc.

\$7.75 PAID for 1853 date Quarters (Arrowless), \$20 for a \$5. Keep all money dated before 1895. Send 10c at once for New Illustrated Coin Value Book, 4x7. Get Posted at Once. Clarke & Co., Coin Dealers, Dept. 49, Le Roy, N. Y.

Patents and Lawyers

PATENTS SECURED OR FEE returned. Send sketch for free report as to patentability. Guide Book and What to Invent, with valuable List of Inventions Wanted, sent free. One Million Dollars offered for one invention. Patents secured by us advertised free in World's Progress, sample free. Victor J. Evans & Co., Washington, D. C.

PATENTS THAT PROTECT AND PAY. Advice and books free. Highest references. Best results. Promptness assured. Send sketch or model for free search. Watson E. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, 624 F Street, Washington, D. C.

PATENT your ideas. \$9,000 Offered for Certain Inventions. Book "How to Obtain a Patent" and "What to Invent." Sent free. Send rough sketch for free report as to patentability. We advertise your patent for sale at our expense. Established 16 years. Address Chandlee & Chandlee, Patent Attys., 976 F St., Washington, D. C.

IDEAS WANTED—Manufacturers are writing for patents procured through me. 3 books with list 200 inventions wanted sent free. Advice free. I get patent or no fee. R. B. Owen, 39 Owen Building, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS, TRADE-MARKS AND Copyrights. Our hand book on patents will be sent free on request. All patents secured through us are described without cost to the patentee in the Scientific American, Munn & Co., Patent Attorneys, 373 Broadway, New York. Branch Office, 625 F Street, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS WORTH MONEY. For books that tell what patents bring Most Money and Why—send 10 cents postage to R. S. & A. B. Lacey, E 62, Washington, D. C.

SHORTHAND IN 30 DAYS

We absolutely guarantee to teach shorthand complete in only thirty days. You can learn in spare time in your own home, no matter where you live. No need to spend months as with old systems. Boyd's Syllabic System is easy to learn—easy to write—easy to read. Simple. Practical. Speedy. Sure. No ruled lines—no positions—no shading—as in other systems. No long lists of word signs to confuse. Only nine characters to learn and you have the entire English language at your absolute command.

The best system for stenographers, private secretaries, newspaper reporters and railroad men. Law yers, ministers, teachers, physicians, literary folk and business men and women may now learn shorthand for their own use. Does not take continual daily practice as with other systems. Our graduates hold high grade positions everywhere. Send-to-day for booklets, testimonials, etc.

CHICAGO CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
875 Chicago Opera House Block, Chicago, Ill.



BE A SALESMAN

Do You Want a Good Position Where You Can Earn From \$1,000 to \$5,000 a Year and Expenses?

There are hundreds of such positions now open. No former experience as a Salesman required to get one of them. If you want to enter the world's best paying profession our Free Employment Bureau will assist you to secure a position where you can earn good wages while you are learning Practical Salesmanship. Write today for full particulars; list of good openings and testimonial letters from hundreds of our students for whom we have recently secured good positions paying from \$100 to \$500 a month and expenses.

Address nearest office. Dept. 106

National Salesmen's Training Association
Chicago, New York, Kansas City,
San Francisco, New Orleans, Toronto.

Short-Story Writing

A course of forty lessons in the history, form, structure, and writing of the Short-Story, taught by J. Burg Kessel, Editor Kessel's Literary Club and Over one hundred Home Study Courses under professors in Harvard, Brown, Cornell, and leading colleges. 360-page catalogue.

The Home Correspondence School
Dept. 270, Springfield, Mass.

Dr. Kessel

LET ME START YOU IN THE MAIL ORDER BUSINESS ANYWHERE

I started with an idea and \$100.00 and made six hundred and fifty thousand dollars in 18 months. I tell you WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO DO IT. Don't be a wage slave; get out of the rut; get grit; get backbone; wake up and start NOW. Write and learn of my money-making mail order plans. My great FREE book, "How to Achieve Mail Order Success," tells all about my own achievements and how I equip, teach and get you started on very small capital. This book tells how to quickly start in your home, while otherwise employed. It is a B line to a large income. Send for my new free book if you want to start a mail order business and start making money now. Address President, Mail Order School, Suite 2267 Brecht Bldg., Denver, Colo.

COPY THIS SKETCH

and let me see what you can do with it. You can earn \$25.00 to \$15.00 or more per week as a modeler or cartoonist. My practical system of personal individual lessons by mail will develop your talent. Fifteen years successful work for newspapers and magazines qualifies me to teach you.

Send me your sketch of President Wilson with c in stance and I will send you a test lesson plate, also collection of drawings showing possibilities for YOU.

THE LANDON SCHOOL of Illustrating and Cartooning
1444 Schofield Bldg., Cleveland, O.



LEARN TO WRITE ADVERTISEMENTS EARN \$25 to \$100 A WEEK

How to Increase Your Salary. We can positively show you by mail how to increase your salary. Book mailed free. **PAGE-DAVIS CO., 410 Page Building, Chicago, Ill., or 150 Nassau Street, New York**

LEARN JEWELERS' ENGRAVING
A high salaried and easily learned trade, taught thoroughly by mail. We will teach the beginner letter engraving that he can gain in years of rigid apprenticeship. We will also improve the skill of any engraver. Send for our catalog. **The Engraving School, 410 Page Bldg., Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.**

YOU CAN WRITE A SHORT STORY. Beginners learn thoroughly under our perfect method; many sell their stories before completing the course. We help those who want to sell their stories. Write for particulars. **School of Short-Story Writing, Dept. 410 Page Building, Chicago**

BE AN ILLUSTRATOR by mail how to draw for magazines and newspapers. Send for Catalog. **Learn to draw. We will teach you School of Illustration, 1000 N. Dearborn, Chicago, Ill.**

Music and Song Poems

SONG POEMS WANTED. Send us your song poems or melodies. They may become big hits and bring thousands of dollars. Past experience unnecessary. Available work accepted for publication. Instructive booklet and information free. Mark Goldsmith Co., Dept. 15, Washington, D. C.

SONG WRITERS—Don't be satisfied with "royalty" propositions. By our original and practical plan you are in a position to realize all profits. Universal Music Pub. Co., Desk 90, Washington, D. C.

MAKE MONEY WRITING SONG Poems. I'll write the music, copy-right in your name, publish and pay you 50% of the profits. Success means thousands. Particulars free. Established 15 years. C. L. Partee, 805 Astor Theatre Bldg., New York.

SONG POEMS Wanted—Send us poems or music. Big money in successful songs. Book Free. Hawthorth Music Pub. Co., 613 G. Washington, D. C.

SONG-WRITERS. Composers send us your words or music. Songs, Waltzes, Two-steps, Ragas. We revise, arrange and publish on royalty. P. J. Howley Music Co., Dep. 9, 102 W. 42d St., N. Y.

Motion Picture Plays

BIG money writing moving picture plays. Great demand. We teach only sure method. Valuable information booklet free. Chicago Photo-playwright College, Box 278-BB, Chicago.

WRITE and sell ideas for Moving Picture Plays. \$10 to \$100 for each. Earn big income in spare time. Illustrated book free. Tells how. National Authors Institute, 415 Gaiety Theatre Building, New York.

WRITE Moving Picture plays; \$10. to \$100 each; all or spare time; experience unnecessary; details free. Atlas Publishing Co., 309, Cincinnati, O.

For Sale—Miscellaneous

ELGIN WATCHES—\$2 A MONTH. Why not buy your Elgin Watch now while you can get it at a special price and on such easy monthly payments that you'll never miss the money! This month we will sell you a \$20 17 jewel Elgin in 25 year gold case for \$16.50 or a fine \$30 17 jewel Elgin in 25 year gold case for only \$19.75, no money down, sent subject to your approval. Write for Free Catalog. We are the largest Watch House in America and trust honest people everywhere. Harris-Goar Co., Dept. 779, Kansas City, Mo.

Personal

HOROSCOPE—HAVE YOUR HOROSCOPE for the new year (1913) cast by the famous English astrologer, Madame Maude. For free trial reading send 10c and birthdate to Madame Maude, Dep. A14, 1233 E. 50th St. Chicago

RENO REVERIES by Leslie Curtis. Odd, fascinating. All about Divorce Colony. Cloth-bound, last edition. \$1.00 postpaid. The Week Co., Reno, Nevada.

Miscellaneous

SOMETHING NEW. We manufacture the handsomest hand-made raffia and satin sewing bag you have ever seen. Price three dollars and fifty cents. Would make a very acceptable gift. Raffia Art Works, Bartlett Building, Atlantic City.

CHINA PAINTING taught by mail. Child can learn. Special advice. Lessons 25c. Particulars for stamp. L. Boehmes, 939-10th St., Denver, Colo.

VAUDEVILLE. I have made money. You can do the same. Experience unnecessary. Send 10 cents for legitimate information. Vando, Oakdale, Conn. R. F. D.



"I stopped my sore throat with this pleasant tasting tablet."

THOUSANDS are saying this every day. Sore throat is now realized by the medical profession as an ailment that if neglected is liable to develop into much more serious trouble, such as Tonsillitis, La Grippe, etc. A sore throat means a lowering of your natural bodily resistance to the millions of germs that you cannot avoid inhaling at every breath; that they have found a breeding spot in the delicate membranes of the mouth and throat cavities. And there they must be subdued.

Gargles and mouth washes have proven ineffective because of the difficulty in using them and their inability to reach the germs, but thousands of physicians today have found that in treating sore throat they attain the best results with

Wulfin's Formamint THE GERM-KILLING THROAT TABLET

Sucked like candy—it melts in the mouth and releases its powerful yet harmless germicide, which mixes with the saliva and is carried easily and naturally into the throat passages, reaching the germs, destroying them and quickly promoting the healing of the membranes.

Formamint is a scientific, pleasant remedy for all mouth and throat troubles. If you have a sore throat, or feel one coming on, prove for yourself the efficiency of this little tablet by writing for a free sample bottle today. At all Druggists. 50 tablets for 50c.

Enrico Caruso,

The world's greatest tenor, writes:
"I have found Formamint Tablets very pleasant to the taste and beneficial to the throat."

Mme. Adelina Patti,

The Queen of Song, writes:
"I have taken Formamint Tablets for some time past and have much pleasure in saying that I find them very beneficial for the throat."

Jack London writes:

"I am tremendously pleased with the antiseptic qualities of your Formamint tablets. Formamint is a real cleanser of mouth germs."

From an article in "The Lancet,"

March 26th, 1908.
"The sole object of a medicinal lozenge is to keep part of the mouth or throat one desires to treat bathed for a time in a drug dissolved in the saliva. I know of only one medicated lozenge—FORMAMINT—which meets this requirement."

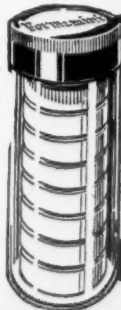
From an article in "The Medical Review of Reviews,"

(New York), December, 1911.
"I have found FORMAMINT to be an excellent antiseptic and bactericide, harmless in its action, exceedingly pleasant to take, capable of relieving painful local symptoms quickly and permanently, and of shortening the duration of inflamed conditions of the throat."

A. WULFING & COMPANY

Makers of Sanatogen—the Food Tonic
Affiliated with The Bauer Chemical Co.

26-N IRVING PL.
NEW YORK



Write Today for FREE Sample

It is of generous size and will prove to you that Formamint is wonderfully effective as well as pleasant in mouth and throat troubles. Send a 2-cent stamp to pay postage and we will gladly send you this free trial tube. Address

A. WULFING & CO.
26-N Irving Place New York City

AINSLEE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

Vol. XXXI. No. 3

CONTENTS FOR APRIL, 1913

Cover Design	Howard Chandler Christy	
Children of the Sun. Complete Novel	Kate Trimble Sharber	1
The End. Poem	Martha McCulloch-Williams	69
The Escapades of Jules Lacroix. Series	Joseph Ernest	70
I.—The Episode of the Disappearing Financier		
April. Poem	Berton Braley	79
The Voice of the Charmer. Short Story	E. W. Hornung	80
My Dream Sweetheart. Poem	Will Lisenbee	87
His New Day. Short Story	Helen Baker Parker	88
Yseult. Poem	A. A. C.	93
The Woman Who Was Born a Lover. Short Story	John Fleming Wilson	94
The White Butterfly. Short Story	Jackson Gregory	99
An April Shower. Poem	Harriet Whitney Symonds	104
Peach-Blossom-of-the-Tiny-Feet. Short Story	Katherine Taylor Craig	105
Alien Blood. Short Story	Louise Rice	113
The Woman With a Past. Series	Anna Alice Chapin	122
V.—A Moment's Halt.		
A Vagabond Thought. Poem	Ella Wheeler Wilcox	127
To Please Mother. Short Story	F. Berkeley Smith	128
An April Night. Poem	Christian Gauss	136
Whoso Diggeth a Pit. Short Story	Flavia Rosser	137
The Bomb. Short Story	Edgar Saltus	144
The Dancer in Scarlet. Short Story	Clara Chapline Thomas	149
Fear. Poem	Glenn Ward Dresbach	151
Plays and Players	A First Nighter	152
For Book Lovers		156
Knowledge. Poem	Clinton Scollard	158
Talks With Ainslee's Readers		159

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$1.80

SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS

Monthly Publication issued by AINSLEE MAGAZINE Co., Seventh Avenue and Fifteenth Street, New York, ORMOND G. SMITH, President; GEORGE C. SMITH, Secretary and Treasurer, 75-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Copyright, 1913, by Ainslee Magazine Co., New York. Copyright, 1913, by Ainslee Magazine Co., Great Britain. All rights reserved.

Publications everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this Magazine either wholly or in part. Entered September 11, 1902, at New York as Second-class Matter, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.



We Specialize on Style

We can hardly make Holeproof Hose *wear* any better. We pay an average of 74 cents a pound for Egyptian and Sea Island Cotton Yarn. Common yarn sells for 32 cents. We send to Japan for silk. Common silk won't do for "Holeproof." Our processes are the latest and best. Ninety-five per cent of our output has outlasted the guarantee for the past thirteen years.

Therefore, most of our time and effort are now being concentrated on *style*.

The result is an ideal hose for occasions where formal evening dress is required—especially at dances and balls, where stylish, sheer hose *that will wear are a necessity*.

Because of this double quality, a million people are wearing "Holeproof."

Holeproof Hosiery

FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Six pairs of cotton hose must wear six months. Three pairs of silk hose must wear three months. That is guaranteed. And it means every stitch. If a *thread* breaks, we replace the hose free.

Look for the signature, *Carl Frieschl*

Stamped on every pair.

The genuine "Holeproof" are sold in your town. Dealers' names on request, or we'll ship direct where there's no dealer near, charges prepaid, on receipt of remittance.

Men's cotton "Holeproof" cost \$1.50 to \$3.00 a box of six pairs; women's and children's, \$2.00 to \$3.00 a box; infants', \$1.00 a box of four pairs. All above boxes guaranteed six months. Men's silk "Holeproof" cost \$2.00 a box of three pairs; women's, \$3.00 a box of three pairs. Silk hose guaranteed three months. Write for free book, "How to Make Your Feet Happy." See how these wonderful hose are made.

HOLEPROOF HOSIERY COMPANY, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Holeproof Hosiery Company of Canada, Ltd., London, Can.

"Wear Holeproof Hose and Find the Mend"



AINSLEE'S

VOL. XXXI.

APRIL, 1913.

No. 3.

CHILDREN OF THE SUN



BY Kate
Trimble
Sharber.

CHAPTER I.

MOTOR accident? Run ahead, Jeff, and see what the trouble is!"

Doctor Cunningham steered his shabby runabout into the grass at the roadside, looking first toward the giant touring car half blocking the way in front of him, to see if there appeared to be any imperative need for hurry; then, as he decided that there was not, he stopped his engine and slipped a smooth stone beneath one of the rear tires to keep the machine from doing an unexpected turn down the mountainside, before he followed on the heels of the little negro boy.

The big machine that stood stranded a few yards before him up the road was a low-bodied, luxurious thing, painted a battleship gray, and showing a heavy coating of dust, discernible even on its light-colored surface. The sun's rays were shining with blinding effect upon lamps and trimmings of glistening nickel. It appeared to be one of those monster machines fitted up for long-distance journeys, for besides an extra supply of enormously large tires, there

was a small trunk strapped at the back, and a suit case of crinkly brown skin, which the doctor knew to be walrus, for it was the same kind of bag as that in which one of the rich physicians from the city always brought a night's supply when he came out to the mountains for a consultation.

In short, this great touring car was evidently a stray visitor from the big, outer world, and it spoke so strongly of wealth that its very smoke had, a little while ago, seemed to curl up into dollar marks as it passed the shabby little runabout down the road.

At the moment the car had shot past him, Doctor Cunningham had imagined it into a sort of monster, relentless and all-powerful—like some iron-and-steel Caesar—which would crush everything that happened to be in its way to its goal. But now it was a dead Caesar, brought to a standstill before him, and so impotent a thing that even his own little runabout need not have stopped to do it reverence if the helping habit had not been an instinct with Doctor Cunningham rather than a profession.

The rear seat of the car was occupied by a young man of thirty or

thereabouts, wearing a tan motor coat over his well-cut clothes, which appeared to the physician's unaccustomed eyes to be unnecessarily smart. At the moment when Doctor Cunningham came up the roadside from behind the car, this young fellow had snatched off his motor cap and was making a frantic effort to stiffen the brim into a semblance of a fan; and the physician saw—hurrying a little—that the face of the young man was bent above the form of a woman whom he had not before observed. She was lying back limply in his arms, an indistinguishable mass of veils; and on the front seat of the car sat a neatly dressed, English-looking maid, hurriedly ransacking an alligator bag.

"Have you had an accident?"

At these words the man in the tonneau started slightly, looking around with an expression of relief. His blue eyes harmonized with the heavy mass of light-brown hair, shining now brightly in the sunlight, and his features would have been handsome had they not been marred by a look of quick suspicion, not sullen, but hard and cold, which seemed to say that he regarded every stranger as his enemy—and gave him small chance to prove himself otherwise. Even now, he hesitated slightly before he answered Doctor Cunningham's query:

"Not an accident with the car, but the lady, here, is very ill! Can you direct me to a house near by where we might telephone—or?"—with a quick, searching look at the man before him—"are you a doctor?"

The case of a clinical thermometer showed its brassy top above the physician's shabby coat pocket, secured to the garment by a small chain and a safety pin, which shone in the sunshine, bright and unashamed.

"I am Doctor Cunningham, of Taladonga, twelve miles down the road, there. I shall be glad to do what I can for the patient. Will you let me see her, please?"

His voice was quiet and full of self-possession; and the man in the car relaxed his position of rigid anxiety.

"Jove, how lucky!"

He muttered this half under his breath, moving over to make room on the seat for the physician, and still holding in his arms the inert form of the woman. As the doctor leaned closer, the young fellow unfastened the clasp of a long, gray silk motor coat she wore, throwing back, with some awkwardness, the veils that had become entangled about a quaint little rose-trimmed bonnet.

"Her heart still beats, but she is very ill," he said, in a low voice, as he smoothed the veil down carefully and disclosed to the eyes of the physician the small, wrinkled face of a tiny woman, evidently very old. "She was paralyzed once, five years ago. She recovered from that, enough to walk fairly well, but her mind—she has been like a child ever since."

"Oh, yes—I see!"

The doctor spoke absently, for he was peering into the miniature face, whose eyes were half closed, and whose lips were slightly drawn down to one side, giving the expression of a queer little crooked smile. Noting this drawn condition of the muscles, the physician slipped off his worn driving gauntlets and began working, very gently, with the eyelids, meanwhile calling to his little negro boy to bring him a cup of water from a spring that chanced to be close by. He placed his head down against the shrunken breast, his ear to her heart. He held the thin hands in his for a moment.

"It looks like another stroke—and a pretty bad one," he finally pronounced, in a low voice, as he straightened up and settled the cushions more comfortably under the woman's head.

"Another stroke?"

"Undoubtedly, and, of course, at her age, bound to be a more serious thing than even the first one, though, perhaps, not with any immediately fatal results; although"—he hesitated and looked again at the woman's face—"I should say that her condition just now is critical in the extreme. How far are you from your home?"

"Home?" The young fellow shook

his head. His expression, even with its admixture of interest and alarm, was still hostile—defensive, rather, a lenient observer might judge, but still showing that his intercourse with strangers, helpful strangers at that, was not easy. "We live a part of the time near Boston, but——"

"Boston? Oh, I beg your pardon!" Something in the half-secretive expression of the young fellow confused and rather annoyed the physician. "I thought from your accent that you lived in this part of the country, and so imagined that you might not be a great distance away from home."

Again the young man shook his head.

"We came South last winter," he volunteered, pushing back some stray threads of snowy hair that had fallen across the woman's forehead, and drawing the veil slightly over the white face and gay little rose-decked bonnet. "We were at Palm Beach for quite a while, then, in February, we went to New Orleans for Mardi Gras. She wanted to go there, and I think she enjoyed it. She can appreciate that sort of thing, you understand—the people, and the lights, and the floats in the parade."

The doctor nodded.

"Afterward we came on to Pass Christian for a little stay—then Mobile. All this journey was made in our car, for she loves motoring, and the trips along the smooth shell roads of the gulf coast seemed to do her a world of good."

"The soft air, doubtless, was most beneficial."

"I imagined so, at any rate, and kept her down there until the heat got too fierce. We came on in this direction then, visiting the larger cities as we passed through, but never attempting anything in the way of sight-seeing that could possibly overtax her strength!"

He flashed this last statement at the physician half suspiciously, as if he expected it to meet with a sneer of ridicule. Doctor Cunningham was still bending over the patient, however, and, after a slight pause, the other man kept on:

"I was afraid the summer down in this part would be too much for her, but she begged so to stay! She never seems to feel the heat."

"Of course not," the doctor returned, mixing a hypodermic injection with a few drops from the cup of spring water which his negro boy had brought him from around a bend in the road. "She has very little blood at all, and what she has is so thin that——" He stopped, poised the needle for a moment before shooting its point into the withered arm. At the contact there was a faint, shrinking movement of the woman's body.

"But what are you going to do now, may I ask?" he kept on, in a brisker tone, as he rinsed off the needle point and dried it on a clean handkerchief. "Do you know that you are twelve miles from Talladoga?"

The young fellow gave a quick gesture of dismay.

"Twelve miles! And then to stop over there!"

"You couldn't possibly attempt a railway journey with the patient in this fix!"

"But what is there in the way of accommodations at—Talladoga?" he asked, the frown of anxiety puckering his brow.

Doctor Cunningham clicked the top of his syringe case. He gave another glance, first, at his patient; then he turned to the young man on the seat beside him, and there was a slight twinkle in his eye. Somehow, at this appeal to him for help, the big car and its occupants had seemed to lose some of their august grandeur.

"You don't know the average small town around this country, or you'd not even think of 'accommodations,'" he said, casting a look of amused disgust in the direction of the valley below. The place had never before seemed so unutterably barren to him. "There's nothing in Talladoga—a yellow depot, a Confederate monument, and a man that graduated in the class with the president's brother."

A half-smothered smile flitted across the young fellow's face.

"But where——"

"A man like you could only want to use Talladouga as a starting point."

"But I could get a train for Washington there, couldn't I? And surely," glancing down quickly at the bundle of veils, "if I could get her into a comfortable sleeper she would be as well off, if not better, than stopping here in any ordinary house we'd be likely to find among the mountains."

"Aye! But getting her there! Judging by her looks now, she'd not live to get there! Then again, she may rally after a few days of rest and stimulation, and outlive both of us! There's only one thing that a doctor knows about a paralytic, and that is that he knows nothing. I do know this, however—she should be put to bed at once."

"Bed? But where?" the young man asked, looking about him with an expression of bewilderment. "What am I to do? This mountain road seems absolutely desolate! For miles back we have passed nothing but the shacks occupied by the railroad hands."

"Yes, I know," the doctor returned absently, "but anything like that is, of course, impossible. You'd die of the heat, to say nothing of the dirt."

"But what am I to do? I must get her comfortable!"

This impetuous speech, with its note of impatience as well as of anxiety, brought a thoughtful frown to the physician's brow.

"Of course, there's Pausilypon," he said slowly, after a moment's absorption.

"Pausilypon?"

"Yes. That's the name of this mountain peak, and there is a house at the top from which it got the name—years and years ago."

"Pausilypon!" the young fellow repeated again, as if something in the familiar sound baffled him for a moment; then, after a little pause, he exclaimed suddenly: "Posilipo!"

The doctor nodded.

"Posilipo is the Italian corruption of the name, and there is a hill on the outskirts of Naples, I believe, which still bears that name."

"Yes, there is," the other young man replied quickly. "It was named for the villa that once stood at the top of the hill."

"As this mountain peak was named. The house is still there, though greatly changed, in both construction and purpose, I believe, from what it was meant to be when it was built. And I don't exactly like to send you there."

The physician had spoken slowly, hesitating and separating his words as if his thoughts were traveling very fast, but the young fellow caught eagerly at the suggestion.

"Any kind of house will do—just so she's comfortable," he insisted quickly. "We're accustomed to meeting with crude hotels sometimes on these trips, and once or twice have stopped over in farmhouses."

At this argument the doctor smiled queerly.

"The house on the hill isn't crude," he answered, halting still over his words, as if his mind were not exactly made up on the subject. "She could be comfortable there, most certainly——" Then, after a moment's silent thought, he nodded his head, his words coming out jerkily: "Oh, go ahead! Just tell them it's a case of life and death—it'll be all right, I reckon."

He stepped to the ground, as if suddenly realizing that every moment was precious, and motioned languidly to the negro boy to start the runabout. The young man leaned over the door of the big machine and held out his hand gratefully. For the time his face had lost its expression of hardness.

"My name is Holbrook—Douglas Holbrook. I am no end obliged to you. You have helped us out of a mighty dilemma, and, of course, we'll want your services as long—as we stay in these parts. Will you come up to the house there," pointing to the steep hillside above them, "later on in the afternoon to see her again?"

The doctor nodded his head. He liked the cordial grasp of the citified young stranger's hand, in spite of the forbidding expression of his face.

"I have sworn that I'd never darken

that door if the whole bunch of 'em died in a pile," he remarked, and the young man in the car allowed himself a momentary smile over the inevitable country feud which he surmised from the medical man's words.

"But this case is different! We have no one to depend upon but you," he insisted, as a thought of his actual dependence upon this mountaineer man of science flashed across his mind.

"Of course, this case is different! I wouldn't be so stiff-necked as to stand back on a small matter of ethics like that even if one of *them* should need me—which certainly isn't probable, if all I hear is true. Sure! I'll look in on you later in the evening—eight or nine o'clock, maybe. That is, if you can persuade them to take you in."

"I believe I can persuade them," the young fellow replied, recalling the occasions when the scattered farmhouses along the desolate country roads had afforded them shelter.

"Well, if they should be moved to take you in, see that the patient gets to bed at once," the doctor reiterated, watching with lazy tolerance the efforts of his small negro, who was valiantly cranking the runabout. "She's had all the stimulation she can take for some little time now, but I'll be sure to look in on you later, and see that she's comfortable for the night."

"Thank you—you are very good."

"And, by the way, I'll be passing a telegraph office in the town. Is there any message I can send for you?"

"No message, thank you! None at all."

The forbidding expression had come back suddenly to the good-looking face, changing it for the moment into something harsh and ugly. The doctor did not see it, for he was watching Jeff and thinking that on the twenty-first twist the engine would surely go.

"I thought possibly you would want to notify her other relatives," he kept on; then, his eyes still fastened on the gyrations of the little African: "If there is any one else belonging to her, they ought to be apprised of this change for the worse, I should think."

The young fellow looked down at the wisp of a woman curled up in the corner of the car like a worn-out, sleepy child.

"There will be no message to send—no matter what happens," he said slowly, and the smartly garbed chauffeur, who had stood by listening to the conversation, jumped into his place at the wheel as his master said these words, and began, with something of an embarrassed flurry, to tamper with the clutch beside him. The maid, too, showed signs of a slight nervousness. The physician, glancing from one of these to the other, saw that his suggestion had been an unhappy one.

"Of course, it doesn't matter really," he hazarded, feeling that he must say something to cover the mistake he had made. "If every one in Christendom were here, they could do no good, still—well, in a case like this, you know how relatives are."

"But she has none," the young man said, and the cold firmness of his voice showed that he considered the subject, at any rate for the time, entirely disposed of. "We are quite alone in the world—she and I."

CHAPTER II.

The road to the mountain house, as indicated by Doctor Cunningham, branched off from the main highway a few hundred yards from the point where the party had halted a little while before, stricken with fear, and not knowing which way to turn. They covered this distance in the car, and, at the turning point, Holbrook saw that the big machine was entering upon a trail through a scrubby undergrowth, and that the road was scarcely more than a broad footpath, softly carpeted with pine needles and an accumulation of last year's leaves.

"Hold on, Henry! No use to get ourselves in a tight place for nothing! You might not be able to turn around up there."

The servant slowed up, finally cutting off the engine.

"Shall I go on ahead, and see if the

people at the house up there will take us in?" he asked.

Holbrook looked about him for a moment, then he loosened his arm, which was doing less to support the sick woman by his side than to guard her against the jolts of the road and the vibrations of the car.

"I believe I would rather go myself and see what kind of a house it seems to be," he replied, standing up and stretching out his left arm involuntarily, to relieve the feeling of strain. "The doctor said that the place was all right for us to go to, but I didn't exactly understand why he looked as he did—a little queer, when he mentioned it. Did you notice anything, Henry?"

The man at the wheel pushed back his cap.

"Yes, sir, I noticed that he didn't look exactly easy in his mind about directing us there!" He lowered his voice and, after a cautious look around him, as if to see whether or not there were lurking ears concealed behind the close-standing trees, went on: "I thought, Mr. Holbrook, that he might have suspected the people up here of being—*wildcatters!*"

At this awful word, Marie, the quiet maid, who had thus far obliterated herself save for the function of finding smelling salts, fans, et cetera, in the bag, gave a little exclamation of terror. Holbrook, hearing it, turned to her, not without a smile of amusement.

"Nothing to be afraid of, Marie," he said soothingly, knowing that the girl was nervous from the shock of her mistress' sudden and alarming turn. "That is, they will on no account harm us, even if they are *wildcatters*, as Henry suspects. In this portion of the country the word is applied to men who make and sell whisky without license."

"They told me down at that last town we passed through that the mountains around here are thick with stills," the chauffeur kept on, evidently getting some quiet enjoyment out of the maid's terror.

"And that doesn't matter in the least to us, since we are not revenue of-

ficers," Holbrook answered quickly. "Nevertheless, I believe I'll just get out here and walk through these woods a bit, and see what the house looks like. It's nothing worse, I feel sure, than the same old things we've had to put up with several times already on this trip—children crying, dogs under the table, flies over it, and fleas everywhere! But, of course, we'll have to put up with it again—anyway until we can do better. You take my place back here, Marie, in case Miss Jane stirs."

He stepped down from the car and, walking away through the woods a few yards, stopped and looked about him for a moment, not so much in doubt as to the road he should traverse, as in a sort of involuntary enjoyment of the country sights and sounds about him. He was a passionate nature lover, and he sniffed the fresh mountain air as a gourmet sniffs the savory odors of a feast.

The golden glow of a late July afternoon was lingering reluctantly at the tips of the sweet-scented trees, as if loath to leave their shelter; and the early-evening calls of the living things were beginning to make themselves heard. The birds had awakened from their mid-afternoon silence, and the locusts were giving occasional sharp calls. It was the kind of afternoon that always brings a vague sort of homesickness to persons of a certain imaginative temperament—a memory of far-away unrealized things, a host of undefined longings.

Holbrook lingered but a moment, shaking off the lazy inclination to loiter on the way and enjoy the sweet freshness of the oncoming night. Then he glanced back at the car with an expression of quick self-reproach, and struck out straight ahead. The ascent was sharp, quite steep in places, and the young fellow, as he climbed the incline, picked a path for the car, which he knew would take the narrow, tortuous road badly.

"I'll carry Miss Jane up in my arms," he muttered, half aloud, as he stopped, panting for breath and flinging off his long coat at the top of the hill.

The pine trees, which had formed a thick woods along the hillside, became gradually a straggling fringe at the summit, and across a furze-covered clearing of three hundred yards or more, he saw the stately trees of an oak grove.

Crossing this clearing, which had a considerable, cuplike depression along its length, he soon found himself in the shadow of the grove, and stopped short with an exclamation of surprise when he saw that, instead of the rough strip of woodland he had expected, he was entering what appeared to be the well-kept park of some wealthy country house. The grove had the cleaned-up, cultivated aspect that goes with a place which people have made a pleasure ground. Pressing on through this wood for a few minutes, he came abruptly upon what he at once surmised was the rear portion of the place he was seeking.

A low stone wall divided the edge of the oak grove from a small meadow of rich-looking blue grass, and a capacious barn, with broad, sliding doors, showed a green roof above a clump of young maple trees at the farther end. From this meadow wound a well-kept driveway, and, some distance away, Holbrook discerned a smart new building of red brick, which, from its size and outlines, he took to be a garage. The actual house was quite shielded from view—intentionally so, it seemed to him, looking on in sudden wonder—by a thick line of trees growing along the garden fence.

Skirting the old stone wall for its entire length at the back, he walked rapidly through the grove of trees that clustered close to the lateral boundary as well, until he had reached the end of the wall, which terminated in a stone pillar, with the name, "Pausilypon," standing out in relief against the surface. Glancing up through a vista in the trees, he came presently upon a view that caused him, first of all, to stop short in amazement, then to give an involuntary exclamation of delight.

"By Jove, some fellow knew what he was about when he selected this spot

for a home!" he exclaimed, but it was a full half minute before he turned to look at the house itself, from the end of the stone wall, which point he had now gained.

Placed upon the far brink of the mountaintop—which he saw now was in reality a considerable plateau—and so situated that the grove of oaks formed a barrier behind its back, while from its front and sides ran a gently sloping incline down to a wooded valley below, was a broad, rambling old stone house, all gray, and brown, and green in the shadows of the fading sunlight. Holbrook turned to it, after he had drunk in, with a bounding sense of pleasure, the glory of the view.

"What a home!" he exclaimed, "and what a place for a home!"

The structure gave out, not without a little baffling incongruity, an air of broad hospitality. Although this great old house had sought a sheltered mountaintop for its setting, and turned its back upon the world, looking down, for miles and miles, upon nothing but wooded valleys with sharp-rising crests as their background, it had a wide, graveled walk leading up to its vast, opened door, and a dozen men could have walked abreast up the shallow front steps.

The house was built of ashlar, whose roughened faces had long ago lost the marks of the tools under the soft coating of gray with which Time finally paints all edifices that he permits to stand. Its windows were many-paned, and their wooden frames were stained a dark greenish-brown. Holbrook observed that, despite the appearance of great height, there were only two stories proper to the building; but, peeping out over the shadow of the tall elm that held its topmost branches protectingly against the roof of the upper porch, were small dormer windows, promising a generous attic, where young eyes, perhaps, might peer into old trunks, while memory went a-journeying.

The porches, upper and lower, were of colossal proportions, and there were rows of fluted columns as supports.

Yet, despite this, the house had little or nothing in common with the usual old Southern mansion; nor, even though the use of ashlar in its construction gave a persistent reminder of farther-back, harder days, had any attempt been made at copying Norman ideas. It was if some man, years back, had built the house to fit about his own personality, rather than to conform to any especial style of architecture. Its lines were straight and simple; its proportions vast; its aspect one of calm and perfect restfulness.

A Virginia creeper across the front of the piazza, and a bed of pink hydrangeas added to the beauty of the place, and the steps, at either end, held brass jars of ferns.

"A most perfect home, or no—surely—"

Surely no home was ever quite like this! Holbrook was on the portico now, looking about him in amazement. He had expected, before he came upon any signs of the domicile, to find the usual crude mountain house, or, at best, a dilapidated cottage, possibly smelling of new paint in spots, and sheltering a brood of noisy, tow-headed children. He had found instead this stately house—a luxurious place, with an atmosphere that seemed to have been made up of several, perhaps many, personalities. There was harmony as a whole, but there were also evidences that a variety of tastes had had play in the general make-up. It was a house with a distinct aura; but, as Holbrook came closer, and looked about him, he saw that the aura was not that of a home. No ordinary set of human beings could need all that perfect beauty for a daily life, and for all life long.

"A clubhouse, more likely—Pausilypon means something like '*Sans Souci*,' I believe! A clubhouse for some set of rich men to retire to and idle!"

He was conscious of a tinge of disappointment as this solution came to him, although he was scarcely aware of just what he would have liked the house to prove itself to be; although he knew that he desired least of all to go into a home—certainly not a home of

people of his own class! Then, in another moment, the clubhouse idea was put to flight by the accumulation of belongings that he saw scattered about on the porch. There were wicker chairs standing about on sage-green Japanese rugs, and over them lay a confusion of newspapers and magazines; while in one of the more distant chairs lay a yard of soft, white linen, its center stretched tightly across the circle of an embroidery hoop.

"No—it's not that. Even idle rich men, big fools as they often are, don't *sew*."

He smiled a little over this thought; then he saw that there was a late copy of *Mayfair* lying near the bit of sewing; and, closer, on a table, was a box of ivory chessmen, the like of which he knew by his own experience commanded a round sum of rupees even in Calcutta. There was a guitar with an inlaid border lying across a wicker seat, and, not far from it, a palette with wet paints glistening around its curve.

"What manner of people can these be to own such things, or, rather, to have brought such things into a God-forsaken wilderness like this?"

He looked about him wondering. He felt a nervous shrinking from asking shelter at such a place as this—a palatial home, evidently occupied by persons of luxurious habits, yet tucked away on a mountaintop, hidden from human sight—and twelve miles from a telegraph station!

"Why didn't that fool doctor tell me whose house it is, without waiting for me to run upon—the Lord knows what!"

He touched the button at the door, glancing rather curiously through the bronze-trimmed wire screen into the hall. It was an immense apartment, cool and shady, and a stained-glass window at the head of the wide staircase gave a solemn dimness to the interior. The floor was of dark-toned oak, glistening with wax; and its stretch was broken here and there by a rug or a silky skin. Teakwood tables held more pots of ferns, giving a home-like air to the rather oppressive room,

and, farther back, enshadowed in the dimness, were the outlines of two or three figures in marble.

Holbrook merely glanced at the furnishings of the interior, for the things he had glimpsed outside had made him feel uncomfortable enough. He touched the bell again impatiently, and, after a few moments' delay, a door opened somewhere at the back of the hall, and a man in the conventional coat of spotless linen appeared.

At the first glance, Holbrook thought that the man was white, but as he came closer, with a low-toned and polite, though somewhat surprised, salutation, he saw that he was a negro of the quadroon or octoroon degree. His face was very calm, and gave Holbrook a quick reminder of the faces that set themselves against the wastes of golden deserts, and look up at night to low-hanging, jewel-bright stars.

"Is your—master at home?"

The negro opened the screen door.

"Will you come in, sir? Mr. Farrel is, at present, the master here, but both he and Miss le Noir are out just now."

"Away from home!"

"Not far away. The whole company is having tea down at the grotto, near the spring, this afternoon, but as a rain seems coming on they will likely be in before long."

Holbrook scarcely heard the names the servant had pronounced, and heeded nothing save the sense of delay that his words implied.

"But I must see some one immediately," he declared, looking around the silent hall and thinking how its quiet restfulness seemed to mock the tumult in his own heart. "I must see some one with authority to let me bring a very sick person here!"

At his words, or, more probably, at the tinge of despair that his voice betrayed, the brown man's calmness dropped, for it had nothing of the wooden stoicism that English servants affect. His face shone with sympathetic interest. He closed the door softly, and motioned toward the drawing-room, but Holbrook shook his head.

"I can't wait! It may mean life and death!"

"But I was going to say, sir, that, although my—the people I serve, are away from home just now, they would certainly wish me to offer any help I can. There is a suite of rooms upstairs always kept ready for some one who comes here occasionally on unexpected visits. I am sure that Miss le Noir would wish this placed at your disposal. Can I help you in bringing the sick person in?"

The extreme and ready willingness of the servant to help seemed to warm a chilled, starved place in the stranger's heart; and he had turned to the white-coated man with an expression of gratitude that extended to the people who owned the house and instilled such a spirit of hospitality into their servants, when something in the unusual luxury of the place, the unexpected splendor of this hidden house, struck him again as a baffling mystery.

"And you're quite sure that your master, or—your mistress, I believe you were saying—" He paused, looking at the servant with inquiry.

The negro man hesitated, in slight bewilderment. It was clear that he was not accustomed to passing wayfarers who stopped at the house and asked questions.

"The young lady I mentioned to you, sir, is Miss Adele le Noir. She acts as mistress of the house because—because she was the first one of this present company to be sent here. She is not the eldest, but she is, perhaps, the best known. You have likely heard of her—she has been a very well-known singer."

Holbrook looked at the man in surprise.

"Adele le Noir *has* been?" he ventured wonderingly. He remembered the concert season in London, only the year before, when this name had confronted him everywhere—on billboards, in the newspapers, in the lifts to the underground stations. "She *has* been a singer?"

The servant's face showed a tinge of sadness.

"She sings no more," he said, in a low voice. "She is here now as mistress of this house, and Mr. Farrel, a very wealthy man, quite elderly, is the one we call master."

At this news, spoken in a monotone, and in the most matter-of-fact manner possible, Holbrook turned away. Even before his disappointment, and greater than this, was a feeling of self-disgust that he should have allowed himself to be led on such a wild-goose chase as this when every moment of time was precious.

"Then, in that case, I must look farther," he said, in a tone which he tried, vaguely, to make noncommittal. "The sick person I mentioned is a lady, very old, and she may be dying."

He turned on his heel, too disappointed and perplexed for any effort toward polite hypocrisy, but the servant had caught at his meaning, and a shade of surprise had swept over his dusky face. He seemed for a moment amazed that any one could so misunderstand him.

"I beg your pardon, sir, if I have misled you," he made haste to protest. "Any lady, old or young, could come into this house! Besides, Miss le Noir, who is a sort of hostess, as I have said, because she was the first one to come of this present party, and Mr. Farrel, whom they all look up to, in a way, on account of his age, there are Mrs. Colman, an actress of reputation; Miss Montrose, who belongs, I have been told, to a very prominent family in Philadelphia; Mr. Comynos—Peter Comynos, the artist, of whom you have no doubt heard; and Mr. Wayne, Reverend Francis Wayne, a New York clergyman."

"Good heavens!" The stranger seeking admittance had turned again on his heel.

"I see that it surprises you, sir, as it would surprise any one who came here a stranger; but Miss le Noir will likely explain their—their object in living here in this manner when she talks with you this evening. Although no strangers ever find their way to this house, it is so secluded, I am sure that when

one does come, and is in trouble, too, they would want me to do what I could for him."

"Explain the object of their staying here?" Holbrook repeated absently, wavering between the necessity of his finding a lodging place at once and the disagreeable possibility of this superb mountain house being an improper place for him to bring the ancient woman under his protection. "I don't understand it, of course."

"And, as I am only their servant, I cannot explain further," the negro said, with such a simple dignity that Holbrook was impressed, and, even against his own judgment, was convinced that whatever the man said must be true.

"No—of course you cannot tell me anything that they might wish to remain a secret," he answered quickly.

"There is nothing to make a secret about—really," the servant returned, "but they would certainly prefer to tell you what they wished you to know themselves. All I can say is that they are a party of friends living quite apart from the world. From the great freedom that they enjoy here—freedom from all care and responsibility, they call themselves, half jestingly, 'Children of the Sun.' The woods and even the near-by valleys around here are their recreation grounds, but this," laying his dusky hand with something like affection against the heavy oak of the doorframe, "this old-fashioned place has been made new for their pleasure, and they call it their 'House of Joy.'"

CHAPTER III.

With the aid of the negro servant, who ran down the hill for the purpose of showing the chauffeur the easiest way up the tortuous road, the big machine was finally brought to a standstill before the steps of the house, and Holbrook began giving directions about the removal of the luggage. The negro man had already caught up a handful of the smaller bags and disappeared with them inside the house.

"You may take Miss Jane's extra wraps and things, Marie, and I'll carry

her up in my arms. I thought I should have to bring her all the way up the worst part of the road, but Septimus, the colored man, insisted that the car could make it without any trouble."

"I'm sure the jolting was not enough to annoy her, sir," the maid replied, as she opened the alligator bag at her feet and thrust back the bottle of smelling salts. Then, reaching for a suit case that the chauffeur had overlooked, she jumped to the ground, just as Holbrook turned and saw what she was about.

"And, by the way, Marie," he called, with an effort toward an offhand manner that was not quite a success, "don't have any of *my* bags taken into the house! Miss Jane will have to be left here, and the people who live in the house will, for common humanity's sake, have to offer her shelter—anyway for a little while—but Henry and I will in all probability take the car and press on to the town to-night."

The maid gave a quiet assent, although her lowered eyes were filled with troubled speculation.

"Of course, if Henry and I go on to the village, we will come back early in the morning and see if Miss Jane is able to continue the journey; but I don't care about being the guest, even for a night, of people who—live in a house like this! I hadn't dreamed that it was more than an ordinary farmhouse, where nothing but a money obligation would be entailed! And it may be that the place is some sort of professional clubhouse or"—with a slightly sarcastic smile—"a religious institution, or—*something* where we can pay our way and have done with it! In that case I'll stay! But I can't in the least make out what sort of people they are from the explanation their servant gave me."

The maid piled up an armful of coats and filmy veils, hurrying off with them in the direction of the house.

"And they certainly couldn't make you out from anything your servants might tell them of you," she whispered into the bunch of gossamer in her arms. "I'm sure I could no more tell them why you live as you do than I could

tell them how the sphinx got her nose broke!"

She had been gone only a few minutes when she appeared again at the front door, darting down the steps and up to the car, where Holbrook was still standing beside the door.

"I thought I'd run back and ask you to wait a little while about bringing Miss Jane upstairs, sir," she said, stopping for breath, her eyes sparkling with pleasure and surprise. "The house is very elegant—quite everything that one could wish to be comfortable in—and the colored man says that Miss Jane is to have one of the front rooms upstairs which was already prepared for a gentleman whom they were expecting at any time; but there are a few little changes to be made—moving out some of his things—so I thought it would be better if you let them get that done first. And I can be unpacking her bag so as to be all ready to get her to bed as soon as you bring her up. It won't be very long, I'm sure, for Henry is helping the man get the things arranged."

She looked anxiously at the small figure huddled down, rather than lying, in a nest of soft pillows across the car seat. Holbrook nodded his head.

"I'll wait here until you call me," he said, and the maid disappeared again.

As is often the case at the end of a period of nerve strain, Holbrook suddenly became conscious of a great weariness, which, until this moment, had not made itself felt. As he had climbed the mountainside a little while before, he had been so engrossed with his quest that no symptom of fatigue could possibly have made its way to his brain; but now that the quest was ended, he felt a sudden giving away of his endurance.

The sick woman was propped securely in her improvised bed; and as he looked at her again anxiously, as if to see that she was secure, his shoulders drooped wearily, and he rested his head against the leather-covered bar that supported the raised top of the machine.

He had stood thus, leaning against

"She sings no more," he said, in a low voice. "She is here now as mistress of this house, and Mr. Farrel, a very wealthy man, quite elderly, is the one we call master."

At this news, spoken in a monotone, and in the most matter-of-fact manner possible, Holbrook turned away. Even before his disappointment, and greater than this, was a feeling of self-disgust that he should have allowed himself to be led on such a wild-goose chase as this when every moment of time was precious.

"Then, in that case, I must look farther," he said, in a tone which he tried, vaguely, to make noncommittal. "The sick person I mentioned is a lady, very old, and she may be dying."

He turned on his heel, too disappointed and perplexed for any effort toward polite hypocrisy, but the servant had caught at his meaning, and a shade of surprise had swept over his dusky face. He seemed for a moment amazed that any one could so misunderstand him.

"I beg your pardon, sir, if I have misled you," he made haste to protest. "Any lady, old or young, could come into this house! Besides, Miss le Noir, who is a sort of hostess, as I have said, because she was the first one to come of this present party, and Mr. Farrel, whom they all look up to, in a way, on account of his age, there are Mrs. Colman, an actress of reputation; Miss Montrose, who belongs, I have been told, to a very prominent family in Philadelphia; Mr. Comynos—Peter Comynos, the artist, of whom you have no doubt heard; and Mr. Wayne, Reverend Francis Wayne, a New York clergyman."

"Good heavens!" The stranger seeking admittance had turned again on his heel.

"I see that it surprises you, sir, as it would surprise any one who came here a stranger; but Miss le Noir will likely explain their—their object in living here in this manner when she talks with you this evening. Although no strangers ever find their way to this house, it is so secluded, I am sure that when

one does come, and is in trouble, too, they would want me to do what I could for him."

"Explain the object of their staying here?" Holbrook repeated absently, wavering between the necessity of his finding a lodging place at once and the disagreeable possibility of this superb mountain house being an improper place for him to bring the ancient woman under his protection. "I don't understand it, of course."

"And, as I am only their servant, I cannot explain further," the negro said, with such a simple dignity that Holbrook was impressed, and, even against his own judgment, was convinced that whatever the man said must be true.

"No—of course you cannot tell me anything that they might wish to remain a secret," he answered quickly.

"There is nothing to make a secret about—really," the servant returned, "but they would certainly prefer to tell you what they wished you to know themselves. All I can say is that they are a party of friends living quite apart from the world. From the great freedom that they enjoy here—freedom from all care and responsibility, they call themselves, half jestingly, 'Children of the Sun.' The woods and even the near-by valleys around here are their recreation grounds, but this," laying his dusky hand with something like affection against the heavy oak of the doorframe, "this old-fashioned place has been made new for their pleasure, and they call it their 'House of Joy.'"

CHAPTER III.

With the aid of the negro servant, who ran down the hill for the purpose of showing the chauffeur the easiest way up the tortuous road, the big machine was finally brought to a standstill before the steps of the house, and Holbrook began giving directions about the removal of the luggage. The negro man had already caught up a handful of the smaller bags and disappeared with them inside the house.

"You may take Miss Jane's extra wraps and things, Marie, and I'll carry

her up in my arms. I thought I should have to bring her all the way up the worst part of the road, but Septimus, the colored man, insisted that the car could make it without any trouble."

"I'm sure the jolting was not enough to annoy her, sir," the maid replied, as she opened the alligator bag at her feet and thrust back the bottle of smelling salts. Then, reaching for a suit case that the chauffeur had overlooked, she jumped to the ground, just as Holbrook turned and saw what she was about.

"And, by the way, Marie," he called, with an effort toward an offhand manner that was not quite a success, "don't have any of my bags taken into the house! Miss Jane will have to be left here, and the people who live in the house will, for common humanity's sake, have to offer her shelter—anyway for a little while—but Henry and I will in all probability take the car and press on to the town to-night."

The maid gave a quiet assent, although her lowered eyes were filled with troubled speculation.

"Of course, if Henry and I go on to the village, we will come back early in the morning and see if Miss Jane is able to continue the journey; but I don't care about being the guest, even for a night, of people who—live in a house like this! I hadn't dreamed that it was more than an ordinary farmhouse, where nothing but a money obligation would be entailed! And it may be that the place is some sort of professional clubhouse or"—with a slightly sarcastic smile—"a religious institution, or—*something* where we can pay our way and have done with it! In that case I'll stay! But I can't in the least make out what sort of people they are from the explanation their servant gave me."

The maid piled up an armful of coats and filmy veils, hurrying off with them in the direction of the house.

"And they certainly couldn't make you out from anything your servants might tell them of you," she whispered into the bunch of gossamer in her arms. "I'm sure I could no more tell them why you live as you do than I could

tell them how the sphinx got her nose broke!"

She had been gone only a few minutes when she appeared again at the front door, darting down the steps and up to the car, where Holbrook was still standing beside the door.

"I thought I'd run back and ask you to wait a little while about bringing Miss Jane upstairs, sir," she said, stopping for breath, her eyes sparkling with pleasure and surprise. "The house is very elegant—quite everything that one could wish to be comfortable in—and the colored man says that Miss Jane is to have one of the front rooms upstairs which was already prepared for a gentleman whom they were expecting at any time; but there are a few little changes to be made—moving out some of his things—so I thought it would be better if you let them get that done first. And I can be unpacking her bag so as to be all ready to get her to bed as soon as you bring her up. It won't be very long, I'm sure, for Henry is helping the man get the things arranged."

She looked anxiously at the small figure huddled down, rather than lying, in a nest of soft pillows across the car seat. Holbrook nodded his head.

"I'll wait here until you call me," he said, and the maid disappeared again.

As is often the case at the end of a period of nerve strain, Holbrook suddenly became conscious of a great weariness, which, until this moment, had not made itself felt. As he had climbed the mountainside a little while before, he had been so engrossed with his quest that no symptom of fatigue could possibly have made its way to his brain; but now that the quest was ended, he felt a sudden giving away of his endurance.

The sick woman was propped securely in her improvised bed; and as he looked at her again anxiously, as if to see that she was secure, his shoulders drooped wearily, and he rested his head against the leather-covered bar that supported the raised top of the machine.

He had stood thus, leaning against

the side of the car, for a minute or more, when he became conscious that some one was coming up, with hurrying footsteps, behind him; but so complete had been the momentary relaxation from the strain of all outside things that he had failed to hear the rapid steps until a voice, vibrant with joyous surprise, broke in upon his moment of quiet. The sound caused him to start violently before he looked around.

"Why, Ambrose Scullin! *Have* you come at last? We've been expecting you for a week!"

A woman had come up behind him, evidently by a pathway that led away past one side of the house down the sudden declivity at his right; and seeing a tall young man with his head half concealed against the side of the car upon which he was leaning, she had mistaken him for the expected guest whom the negro servant had mentioned to him. He straightened his shoulders and turned toward her, a slight flush mounting his cheek.

"I beg your pardon——"

She gave a little laugh when she saw her mistake, but it was palpable that she was surprised at seeing a stranger there, and she was just as evidently a bit confused.

"Oh, I beg *your* pardon! I—heard the sound of your car, and thought that it must be Mr. Scullin coming to take us by surprise! We were eager to know, so I told them—the others—that I would come and see! Then, when I saw you standing there—with your back to me, I could not see your face—I felt sure that it was Ambrose Scullin—until you turned around."

"Ambrose Scullin!"

"Yes, we were expecting him, and—so few strangers ever come here that naturally I was surprised! I am Miss le Noir, and live here at this house."

She came forward, holding out her hand. Holbrook was struck with her air of simple friendliness, even while there was still a questioning wonder in her eyes.

He advanced, a little uncertainly. His head was turning giddy with the

quick succession of surprises, for, even before he had been able to take in the sense of what the girl was saying to him, or to notice with more than one rapid sweep of the eyes her general appearance, he had been beset by a peculiar strain of memories as she had pronounced the name of the man whom she had supposed him to be.

Ambrose Scullin! If this girl had come up to him and called his own name he could scarcely have been more surprised. Yet, familiar as was the name that she had pronounced with so much conviction, Holbrook was certain that he had never known any man by that name. It was really nothing more to him than a sound, yet a sound that had, at some time in the far-away past, held a vital meaning for him; and it fell upon his ears now like the one clear spot in some half-remembered dream. It baffled and confused him for the moment, even more than his own uncomfortable position, or the question in the eyes of the girl standing before him.

He advanced and caught the hand she extended.

"I am Douglas Holbrook, of Boston, and—sorry to disappoint you——" Their eyes met in a fitting smile, although the face of each was very grave. "I was directed to this house by Doctor Cunningham, of Talladougha, who chanced to be passing on the road below here just a while ago when—we needed him very badly."

The girl's eyes followed his toward the huddled figure in the car, and her face suddenly underwent a change.

"Is there some one—ill?" she asked, in a low tone, as she came close to the car and bent a half-inquiring, sympathetic glance upon the small, withered face, which showed with ghastly contrast against the gay little roses of the smart bonnet. "Has—has she fainted?"

"No." Holbrook shook his head, his eyes filled with troubled anxiety. "She suffered a stroke of paralysis—a second one—just a while ago. We have spent several weeks motoring through these mountains, and were hoping to reach Talladougha this evening, in time

to catch the train for the North—for I was afraid the heat was getting too great for her—but this stroke came on, and the physician, who happened to be passing just then, examined her and said that her condition is critical in the extreme."

The girl was looking at the woman with a pitying glance of understanding.

"Of course, you couldn't think of keeping on now," she said, and her manner struck Holbrook as possessing a certain practical grasp of the situation. "She ought to be put to bed at once, and have a competent physician." Then, turning again to the man, she demanded with some eagerness: "Have you found any of the servants at the house and told them of the trouble?"

Again, at her ready willingness to help, the starved, barren place in Holbrook's heart felt a glow of gratitude.

"Yes, Septimus, your man, insisted that you would be willing to give shelter to any sick person who happened to be in need of a night's lodging."

"Shelter?" She gave another flitting smile. "That is the least of the comforts we can offer, Mr. Holbrook. Doctor Cunningham, himself, probably little suspected, when he directed you here, what a very fortunate thing it would be for your—relative—the sick lady—to be brought here. Why, we have everything she could possibly need! There is a trained nurse, who has taken her M. D. degree; there is a medicine cabinet filled with every emergency need; there are hospital supplies—everything!"

Holbrook gave an involuntary start; then a light of understanding dawned in his eyes.

"This place is a hospital!" he exclaimed, and the girl caught and wondered at the note of infinite relief in his voice.

"No—not a hospital, nor even a rest-cure place, although it might easily be," she answered hastily. As she turned quickly to him, Holbrook saw that her eyes were a vivid brown, flashing out, with a somewhat weird effect, from her face, which was thin and pallid. "And, of course, you'll not want to stop now

and listen to any sort of explanation as to just what it is. Your patient must be put to bed at once—and I can assure you that you will be very welcome here! There is plenty of room for—all of you."

Holbrook's face stiffened involuntarily.

"You are more than good to be willing to take in people who are utter strangers to you," he said, striving to keep from his voice the tone of harshness that he knew had grown to have a settled place there; "but I can only bring myself to intrude so far as is absolutely necessary. There is an English maid who will stay and look after her mistress through the night, but my chauffeur and I will go on to the town, returning in the morning to see if—if she is able to continue the journey."

The girl had kept her eyes fixed upon his face as he spoke; then, as he finished, she shook her head, looking at the woman sadly.

"She will not be able to start out again to-morrow," she said, with such a note of authority that Holbrook fancied she had more than once been brought face to face with serious illness. "She should not try to travel again for many days. Of course, you don't understand the state of affairs in this household, or you would realize that your coming will not entail extra trouble—even on account of the illness—as it would in an ordinary home. On the other hand, we shall be glad to have you stay as long as—she needs rest. She is evidently very, very ill!"

Holbrook's eyes met hers, still clouded with anxiety and a wavering doubt.

"The physician thinks she may not rally at all. This is her second stroke."

"And she is very old, too," the girl observed pityingly.

"She is seventy-nine. They don't recover at that age."

"They don't recover, but sometimes they linger for months—barely alive. My grandmother was paralyzed, and I remember her condition so well."

There was a movement at one of the upstairs windows just at this point, and

the maid, looking down and meeting Holbrook's eyes, called to him softly, her voice carrying with a penetrating clearness in the perfect silence of the place:

"The room is ready now, Mr. Holbrook, if you will bring Miss Jane up."

He nodded his head slightly.

"All right, Marie."

The girl, still standing beside him, had glanced up, attracted by the sound of the maid's voice.

"I see that Septimus has arranged for one or the other of you to have the room that is usually occupied by Mr. Scullin," she said. "There is another just back of it, and quite comfortable, or—a whole suite in another wing. The house is really larger than it looks from the front, and there are two wings running back, one of which is always kept in a state of comparative readiness for Doctor van Zandt when he chances to come down here unexpectedly."

Holbrook was tampering nervously with the door of the car.

"You are kind—most kind," he said, in a low tone.

She drew slightly aside, with the air of one happily dismissing the subject.

"Anyway, Septimus can be trusted to arrange for your comfort. Can you lift her without disturbing her, do you think?"

The man, unwillingly enough, turned from the car and squared his shoulders, as if to face an enemy.

"Miss le Noir, I cannot express how deeply I appreciate your kindness, but—I must not stay! Indeed, I am never a guest at any one's house, unless—" He paused, and the silence was filled with a sense of painful embarrassment. The girl, watching him for a moment with a puzzled expression, finally broke into a little laugh, which, in itself, was full of sadness.

"I see, Mr. Holbrook—and it is I who must apologize! Of course, I understand now that you are reluctant about staying at a place whose people are rather mystifying! Is it not so?" Then, quickly: "What did Septimus tell you about us, or did he tell you anything?"

The man looked at her deprecatingly, but her eyes were insistent.

"When I rang and asked for the master of the house he told me that Mr. Farrel was the one whom the servants call master, at present; and that you occupied the position of mistress."

"Which, of course, wasn't clear," the girl broke in, but there was no shadow of confusion in her frank face.

"No, naturally, I didn't understand; but he went on to tell me that there were several other friends living with you here."

"Yes, there are. There are six of us in all—two other women besides myself, and three men; Mr. Farrel, quite old, is a banker, well known in the Middle West; Francis Wayne, a young minister from New York; and Peter Comynos, whom, of course, you know, by reputation."

The man nodded absently.

"And, naturally, you wondered what we were doing here—a party of friends keeping house together in the wilderness?" she asked.

"The man said that you called yourselves 'Children of the Sun,'" Holbrook repeated.

She smiled.

"The name has been given us rather," she answered gravely, "and we are trying to live up to it. It is the keynote to Doctor van Zandt's idea in sending us here."

"Van Zandt, the nerve man?"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"No, but, of course, I've heard of him. I've lived in New York, by fits and starts, for the past five years."

"Well, we are all patients of his. This house belongs to him, and he keeps it only for people whom he wishes to isolate from the busy, struggling world. They come here to do nothing—therefore he calls them 'Children of the Sun.' The Arabs—you remember—and desert dwellers—all southern races who are supposed to toil not, neither spin," with a whimsical smile, "have had this name applied to them."

"However, to make the home atmosphere of the place predominant, there is

an arrangement whereby the first woman of any relay to be sent here is installed, during her stay, as mistress of the house. It is a nominal position, of course, for each member has equal privileges, and harmony is the unailing rule; but it is rather pleasant, nevertheless, for most of the people who come here are from the professional world, and have had only glimpses of a home life, now and then. He is phenomenally generous to us in planning for our comfort, and there is a specification that, so long as we are installed as residents of this house, he will send no one here without our consent. But with the consent of all, we can include any one who is—who finds it necessary to come."

"Then it is a sort of rest-cure idea, after all?" he ventured eagerly, but she shook her head.

"There is no thought of cure," she replied, and Holbrook saw that her eyes had darkened strangely. "We come here simply to—relax, for we have worked ourselves past the limit."

"But what I mean is, that it is, in the actual sense, no home?"

"No."

"And other people may come here under the same conditions that you come?"

She smiled wearily.

"Other people may—yes; but no one would wish to."

He looked puzzled.

"Of course I don't understand," he said finally, with a touch of disappointment and impatience. "If it is a place where I may come and be at home for a few days, as you say you are, for a financial consideration, it will, indeed, be a godsend; but for my own part, I cannot bring myself to obtrude into any one's home life."

"But you can do that, if you like! Mr. Scullin is sure to be getting in here before many days, and he attends to all the financial arrangements. Meanwhile, we can make you comfortable—and tell you our story later. It is—a depressing story, and I would rather make you welcome, showing you the brighter side of our life here, first. You can be much

more comfortable here than in that miserable little town, and—after you have met the others—you might really prefer staying here to running the risk of having her"—with a glance at the crumpled heap on the car seat—"suffer another illness before you have gone half a dozen miles on your journey."

"Yes—I don't like the thought of taking her any farther until she is much better."

"Then the thing for you to do is to take her upstairs now, and let her maid put her to bed. Then let Septimus arrange a room for you—anyway for tonight. A rain seems coming on, and it would be foolish for you to go on to the village."

"I am afraid——"

She gave a little laugh.

"Don't be afraid! I told you a while ago that we shall all be glad to have you. A dinner guest! You don't know how much pleasure it will give us."

There was a touch of levity in her manner—the first she had shown, for her face was very grave; and, as Holbrook wavered for an instant, he realized that the invitation held appeal, as well as welcome, and he decided, abruptly, that he would let her have her way.

He had seen at a glance that she was, or had been, ill, and that her face held lines of heavy thoughtfulness deeper than any girl's face should hold; and it came to him, as he looked at her, that, young as she evidently was, she must have had to throw away her vitality in prodigal heaps to have blazoned her name, in so short a while, through all the world's best-known concert halls.

He fancied that she had realized her appearance of illness, and had tried to combat it, for her smart gown of natural-colored linen was brightened at the collar with a crimson silk tie, as if to relieve the pallor of her face, and there were broad cuffs to the elbow sleeves turned back in a way to avoid accentuating the slenderness of her thin arms. Her straight hair, of a rich chestnut brown, was parted and brushed back in shining sweeps across her ears,

giving to her face something of a madonnalike simplicity, and the oblong coil at the back was held in place by half a dozen tortoise-shell pins. Holbrook's eyes had taken in all these details, half hungrily, as she stood talking to him.

"Thank you," he said, his voice holding a note of sincere gratitude. "You are more than good."

"And you will stay," with a quick smile touched with friendly raillery, "at least until after dinner, when you can meet the others, and see how you like them?"

"Yes—certainly, until after dinner."

"Then it is I who must thank you," she cried impulsively. "You've no idea what the sight of a different face—the tones of a different voice—will mean to us, living as we do, away from every one! You must give us all the news of the outside world! We haven't been off this mountain peak since early March, and we're *starved*!"

"But I'm afraid that I shall be only a poor companion," he answered quickly, and his brow puckered a little as he spoke. "I know nothing of the outside world, myself. I travel many places—in this car, but I never stop long nor try to make friends anywhere."

"Oh, but you're *in* the world! You can go where you like." She came a step closer and lowered her voice a trifle. "You can give me news of my *own* world, I dare say! You can tell me about all the singers—Mary Garden, and Geraldine Farrar, and the others." Then, with a little lenient far-away smile, as if she were repeating a story about some foolish child: "I wanted a big reputation—like theirs—once—and I didn't get it! I worked and *worked*, until—" She shrugged her shoulders. "Oh, well! I'm thinking how delighted Peter Comyns will be, too, and the others, when I tell them that we have a guest who is fresh from the big world we have left. They will hail you with delight, for there was the greatest excitement down in the ravine this afternoon when we heard your car, and thought that it was Mr. Scullin

coming. He, too, is charming—always telling us the things we want to hear!"

At her little impetuous speech her cheeks had flushed slightly, and Holbrook saw then that it had been her pallor that had caused her eyes to look unnaturally large and dark. This touch of pink across her face gave her a sudden gleam of loveliness.

The man looked away from her quickly, and flung wide the car door, gathering up the featherweight form of the woman in his arms. There was a faint stirring of her hands as he lifted her, and he stopped short, bending his head attentively above her deathlike face.

"Are you feeling better, Miss Jane? Does anything hurt you?" he asked.

He might have been addressing a little child, so gentle was his tone; and the eyes of the girl, watching him in wonder, were filled with a sudden admiration. She ran quickly up the steps in front of him and across the piazza, holding the screen door open for him to pass. He looked at her gratefully as he crossed the threshold.

"Thank you," he murmured quietly, and in another moment his footsteps were echoing down the long hall.

CHAPTER IV.

At the foot of the staircase he paused a moment, shifting his burden lightly in his arms. To his right, across the hall, was a great door to the dining room, now thrown wide. Already a servant, with noiseless step, was spreading the cloth over the long table, and the sound of clinking silver came from the interior of the room. A shaft of dying sunlight came in through the tall, doorlike windows, which were shadowed with damask draperies over webs of thin Brussels lace; and an immense crystal chandelier just over the table was lighted. Holbrook saw that electric wires had been cunningly run through the antique bronze framework of the apparatus, like fiery new blood currents through ancient veins; and he was the kind of man who could feel a keen sense of gratification that, even in details, the dignity of the old order of

things in this house had been preserved.

As he reached the head of the steps, however, he saw that the effort had abruptly ceased, and that the rooms in the second story were frankly modern.

Marie came out into the corridor as she heard his footsteps, and directed him to an apartment at the far end of the house.

"This is for Miss Jane, sir, and Septimus, the colored man, said that he would prepare the one just next it for you, Mr. Holbrook. There are lovely baths everywhere, and so many windows that no one could need a sleeping porch at this house."

The maid's face was beaming with the satisfaction of a sybarite, and Holbrook gave a faint smile.

"Well, that is very nice, Marie, and I'm sure we're fortunate to have come to such a place. You see, Henry was wrong, after all, in imagining that it was a wildcatters' den!"

He crossed the room and deposited the little old woman on a couch beside the bed, then stole out softly on tiptoe. Her maid undressed her, slipping off the small, excessively dainty garments with an expression of pitying sorrow, as she lay still in a half-conscious state, her eyes closed, and her breath coming in labored gasps. She gave a long-drawn, smothered sigh as Marie slipped a filmy night robe over her head and placed her upon the bed.

"Are you comfortable, Miss Jane?" the girl asked softly. "Is your head too low?"

There was no answer, no sign of understanding, even; and Marie, drawing the sheet smoothly over the bed, walked across the room, and began busying herself over the pile of traveling bags which the chauffeur had deposited in the corner.

She was aroused presently by a rap at Holbrook's door. Septimus was there, talking; and by sitting very still, she could hear what was being said.

"Mr. Holbrook, dinner will be ready at seven. That will give time to have your clothes pressed, if you will let me have them now."

Marie listened attentively, her back aching with the strain of her tense muscles. She remembered that Holbrook had ordered all *his* luggage left in the car, and she smiled when she realized that he must have changed his mind later, for she could hear distinctly the bumping of a heavy suit case in the next room.

"Henry, my chauffeur, does these things for me when we are out on trips like this," she heard Holbrook's voice saying, and the unwonted animation in the tones made her keen, blue eyes grow round with wonder. "I am—rather fussy about how they are pressed."

Septimus gave a quiet laugh.

"So is Mr. Comynos, sir—very particular! He has his Japanese servant down here in the country with him, and the other gentlemen have all pressed him into service—even Mr. Scullin when he's here—because he is an extra good hand. He will do your clothes now, as your own man is busy with the car."

"Well, that's lucky, I'm sure!" Holbrook's voice answered, with some heartiness, and the maid realized, with a gasp, that this most unusual young gentleman could be very much like other men when he chose. "Have them back in time, Septimus!"

"Yes, sir! There's plenty of time." And then the door closed softly.

Less than half an hour later, Septimus was back at the door with the clothes, beautifully smooth and glistening; and as Holbrook began slipping rather hurriedly into them, he was conscious of a bewildered feeling of unreality. In spite of the natural anxiety he felt over the stricken woman in his care, and the persistent feeling of discomfort which reminded him that he was in a most unusual and decidedly uncertain position, he was in a queer flutter of excitement.

He realized this, not without a little tinge of pleased surprise that he could feel so once more; although he muttered to himself that any silly girl dressing for her first dance might have just such feelings. He was afraid—with a wholesome sort of dread—of

doing something that later would have to be undone; yet at the same time, under the influence of the appeal that he had read in the girl's manner as she stood beside him at the car door, and asked him to stay, he was half daring.

He settled his white tie firmly down against his collar, and looked into the mirror. He was as devoid of ordinary vanity as a man well could be who had lived quite apart from his own kind for nearly six years, but as he saw his reflection now in the glass before him, he was able to take in the details of the picture in an impersonal, detached sort of fashion, as if he were taking stock of a stranger.

An involuntary feeling of satisfaction passed over him, like the tremor of joy that might come to a man upon finding some long-forgotten treasure in an old and disused room of his house; for the reflection in front of him showed a well-shaped and intellectual head, eyes that were honest even while they shone with a hard, cold light; a mouth, sweet and clean, that denoted a certain gentleness of nature, despite the square-cut, harsh-looking chin.

"God! I look like a man!"

He muttered the words, and, as the thought pierced him, a look of greater, more reckless, daring came into his eyes.

"If I might meet these people to-night without letting them know—anything—they would be likely to accept me for what I look to be! Good God! But could I do it? Could I talk to them as I once talked to people? Could I make that girl believe—just for an hour—that I am decent?"

Then, with this thought—this desire to repay in a tiny measure Adele le Noir's friendliness to him by being for a little while the man she so evidently imagined him to be—the look of daring settled into one of resolution.

"I will meet these people to-night as an equal—will talk as they talk—fall into their mood—just to see if I can! I'll prove to myself that I haven't forgotten how!"

It had been years since he had sat down as an invited guest at any man's

table. Hotels, ships, dining cars—the big house in the Boston suburb, had been his haunts, but never once had he found himself inside the portals of a man's club even, much less of a home. And every man's eyes had been turned contemptuously upon him during these years—wherever any one chanced to know his story. He had been welcomed and smiled upon all this time by one being only—the little old woman dying in the next room! Her childlike eyes had never seen the world's contemptuous looks. She had always been fond of him—all his life—and during these last few years her affection, vague and hazy as it was, had been all that he could count on in the world. She had been wont, in bygone days, to call him a good boy, and she had never had occasion to change her opinion of him—no matter what the world thought. He was always her good boy, or her fine young man, and she had often declared that there was only *one* other like him in the world.

"You two boys must grow up into grand young men," she had always counseled them, as the twain had gone to pay duty visits to her at stated intervals during the years of their youth. "You have a deal of your Uncle Tom's good looks, Douglas, but Philip has his voice—oh, so exactly—and my greatest wish for you is that you should grow into splendid men—like him!"

As long as her mind had been clear and her memory had been able to present events as they really had happened years ago, this withered woman had flushed slightly whenever she had mentioned his uncle's name; for she was a lonely old maiden, feeding on memories, and the handsome Colonel Tom Holbrook had lain for years in an unknown grave near Shiloh.

He fell to thinking of these things as he stood before his mirror dressing that evening, and as he recalled, with a lenient, half-sad smile, her quaint little old-maidish prinness as she admonished him and Philip, his throat contracted quickly, and a mist showed for an instant in his blue eyes.

To her, for years, there had always

been "the two boys," inevitably two—as inseparable to her in her fondness for them as they had always been to each other. The bond between the two had been extraordinary, even for brothers. Other people had called them, with a mixture of admiration and wonder, Damon and Pythias—David and Jonathan; but to her they had always been her dear favorites, "the two boys," until the terrible, mystifying time nearly six years ago! Since then there had been only one—for the other boy had gone! And again, so long as her mind had remained clear, she had flushed more than ever, even with a wondering, half-guilty look, whenever Philip's name had been mentioned in her presence.

Holbrook gulped back the queer feeling in his throat, and set his face fiercely. He crossed the room to the window, and drew back the curtains, so that the warm, damp air might penetrate inside. The rain had come on gently, more like a persistent, autumnal wetting than the passing summer shower that might have been expected; and he stood listening a little while to the gurgling noise it made as it ran along the tin gutter under the eaves. It was a homelike sound, somehow, and had a pleasant tinkle in his ears. After a few minutes he switched off his lights and walked out into the corridor, stopping at the next door and rapping gently.

"Is Miss Jane resting quietly, Marie?"

"She has not moved, sir, nor spoken."

Holbrook, peering into the darkened room and meeting the maid's anxious eyes, nodded his head.

"The doctor said that it would probably be that way. He will come again during the evening, and tell us what to do. Call me at once, Marie, if she rouses and asks for me."

"Yes, sir, I will."

He went slowly down the stairway, pausing at the corner for a glance at the silver-faced clock. Seven o'clock had chimed a few minutes before, and as he reached the foot of the steps, Adele le Noir came from the drawing-room, crossing the hall to meet him.

"Mr. Holbrook?"

He came out of the shadow, into the bright light that was shining from the door of the drawing-room. She smiled.

"I was waiting to present you to the others, but it seems that they are all a little late to-night. It has put them in a flutter—to think that they are really going to see some one from the outside."

She held out her hand to him again, in a half-shy effort toward an additional welcome, and Holbrook, as he caught the hand in his, could not refrain from contrasting this quick, warm friendliness with the shallow smile of welcome which nearly any other accidental hostess would have considered all that was necessary to bestow.

The girl had dressed herself in a rose-colored gown of some soft, shimmering stuff, and the warm tint, coming high at her throat, cast its reflection against her face, giving it a delicate and beautiful glow. The man held her hand in his only an instant, dropping it and turning away his eyes from her beauty.

She led the way across the hall to a small, homelike library on the other side.

"We'll wait for them here," she said, motioning him to a chair beside the long table. There was a green-shaded light, a warm-toned rug, and Jacobean furniture. A small bust of Scott, in a marble plaid, smiled down with a quizzical expression upon them, and a Wedgwood bowl held a mass of pallid Mycrovella roses.

"What a homelike room!" the man exclaimed, half involuntarily, and Adele le Noir smiled.

"We love this room! It's always such a cozy little den, even when the weather is gloomy outside, and we prefer it to the big drawing-room across the hall. We use it always as a council chamber, too, whenever we have any gigantic discussion afoot. That big chair at the end is Doctor van Zandt's throne, and we satellites cluster around him, listening to every word he says, whenever he comes down for a flying visit."

She sat down across the table from

Holbrook, and rested her elbows upon a pad of fresh blotting paper stretched out before her. As she raised her hands and her chin dropped lightly into them, a pair of thin, carved bracelets on her left arm slid downward toward her elbow, with a jangling, golden noise.

At the sound, a dull flush mounted the man's cheek, for he remembered that once, six or seven years ago, a pretty young girl had sat down thus before him one evening, and, as she had rested her chin in her hands, her bracelets had dropped back with that same jangling, golden sound. And he had remarked at the time the peculiar music of it; for his manner with women, that period of his life, had been easy and graceful. He had always noticed their little belongings and loved them, with a love that was half reverent, half sensuous, a love that had, through all the intervening years, been starved.

From his comment upon the beauty of the house, the girl launched into a description of the surrounding grounds, and was telling him how they had lingered in the little grotto at the spring all the afternoon, while he was seeking admittance at the house, when she broke off abruptly and rose to her feet.

"I hear Mr. Farrel coming down the steps," she said, and something in the vivacity of her manner, which Holbrook knew intuitively was unwonted, caused him to realize just how much of an event to this strange little company his coming was. "He's our millionaire, as I believe I've already told you—bankrupt in blood vessels! He came here five months ago, ill and unhappy because he must break away from his beloved office. Now—Izaak Walton himself never knew the half about angling that he knows! He doesn't talk about anything else! Can you discuss fishing with him?"

He smiled.

"Yes, I know a little something about the gentle art of angling! I was brought up on a bayou——"

"A what?"

"A bayou—that means, in the farther South, a small river or creek."

"But what a pretty word! Bayou,"

she repeated, trying to imitate the off-hand pronunciation he had given the unusual word. "Ah, here he is——"

She went forward to meet him, her manner half affectionate, half deferential; and, as Douglas Holbrook's eyes rested upon the pair, he saw that the picture which the negro man's unwitting words had conjured up in his mind that afternoon, when he had asked his wondering questions about the master of the house, had been the height of absurdity.

"Mr. Farrel, this is Mr. Holbrook—the guest of whom I told you."

The old man shuffled up, holding out a thin, clawlike hand.

"I'm sure we're delighted to see you, Mr. Holbrook! We hadn't realized just how lonely we were until we heard the sound of your car this afternoon. We are Children of the Sun, all right, but we appreciate a visitor from the other planets—don't we, Adele?"

"Even when you're surrounded by stars?" Holbrook laughed, with an inward quiver of pleasure that he could so easily fall in with their mood.

The girl flushed at his graceful little compliment, while the old man frankly rubbed his hands together.

"That's right! That's right! And she's not the only one, either. Everybody said that Francis Wayne was in a fair way to being a bishop—he gave such promise. And Peter Comynos is here, too! You know his work?"

Before Holbrook could answer, the young Greek himself had appeared in the doorway. He stood at the threshold for an instant, as if he were taking stock of the guest he had come to welcome. He was a handsome fellow, strikingly so, with his severe black-and-white coloring, and almost too-perfect features, but there was no evidence of the dandy about him, nor was there any attempt at the conventional "artistic" mode of dress. On the contrary, he had a particularly "shorn" look, if one might so describe the faultless fit of his evening clothes, the excessive neatness with which his tie nestled against his high collar, the way in which his short, straight hair was brushed back from his

forehead, and the closely cropped aspect of his small, dark mustache. He had an excellent figure, and Holbrook noticed that he moved with a peculiar, rapid grace, like a slender arrow going straight to its mark.

"Glad to have you with us!" he said, with a friendly spontaneity, and it seemed that the foreign sound in his speech was due to a deep, mellow intonation, rather than to any real accent. "We hope that the sick lady will be better."

"Thank you."

Francis Wayne had come across the hall and entered the library close upon the heels of the Greek. Holbrook recognized him at once as the minister Adele le Noir had mentioned to him, for he was dressed in the usual clerical garments for evening, and their somber black accentuated the fragility of his face and figure. He was small in stature and excessively slight, with clear, blue eyes that looked out with a sort of innocently searching look from his delicate, godlike face. Some one hailed him as "Matzoth," and Mr. Farrel explained to Holbrook, with a twinkle, that it meant unleavened bread.

"The parson has always lived quite apart from things worldly," the old fellow said, as the young priest came into the room and greeted their guest with a pleasant cordiality, less spontaneous than the Greek's, but more personal. "It was Mrs. Colman's idea to christen him Matzoth, and we seldom call him anything else."

"She says I look as if I still believe in Santa Claus," the minister explained, with a smile of deprecation. "'Matzoth!' Isn't it a name?"

"And there was never a greater misnomer," Adele le Noir declared. "Instead of being unleavened, he is the little leaven that leavens the whole loaf."

There was a laugh, and before it had died away, Mrs. Colman came into the room. She was a tall, large-proportioned woman, and a physiognomist would undoubtedly have said that her salient characteristics were a sweeping generosity first, a keen intelligence second, and an all-conquering sense of hu-

mor third. She walked with less grace than stateliness, and Holbrook caught himself thinking that any one of the numerous marble "Roman Matrons" scattered through Italian museums might have just such a gait if she should suddenly come to life and lift herself from her couch of stone.

The easy swing of this big woman's walk, no less than her generous proportions, seemed in a measure to cover the short, halting steps of the tiny, deformed creature who slipped into the room at her side, and whom Holbrook knew a moment later to be Cecelia Montrose—the last of the six.

CHAPTER V.

He was presented to the big actress first, then to the other woman; and, as he looked down upon the small, crooked shoulders of the latter, he was conscious of a pang. He had read many romantic stories of hunchbacks with sad, angellike faces, wherein resignation might be read by those who ran, and in whose calm eyes was the story of a great tragedy—long since dead. But he saw at a glance, and with a feeling of deep pity, that this girl's face was different.

It was a delicate oval, dark, but with the rich Irish coloring that so often goes with deep-blue eyes and very long, black lashes. Her hair, too, was black and wavy, sweeping back crisply from her blue-veined temples. But her mouth was of such exquisite lines that her face was absolutely dominated by it, as one might imagine that her nature would be dominated by the power suggested in its curves. It was more, much more, than any merely pretty "Cupid's bow," the lips being ripe and red, and holding a story so full of sex and the promise of what sex love might have meant to her, that one needed only to look at it to understand the living rebellion in her eyes.

The girl belonged to a Philadelphia family of great social prominence, and all her life had been a misfit in her surroundings. So much Holbrook had gleaned from the slight sketch Adele le Noir had given him of her during

their talk together; and so strong was the instinct of chivalry in his nature that he found himself much more profoundly stirred by the sight of her helplessness than he would have been by her beauty if her figure had been in keeping with her matchless face.

"Mr. Comynos monopolizes Dede—Mrs. Colman—and Miss Montrose every evening, because he says he doesn't like the exertion of speaking English while he's at dinner, and they speak French with him," Adele le Noir explained, as the meal was announced, and the party went out into the dining room. "Mr. Farrel, Mr. Wayne, and I prefer our native tongue; so we group ourselves into two distinct factions—this way—" She indicated their places at the table.

"But I see you have put Mr. Holbrook where he can take sides with both, Adele," Mrs. Colman observed, "although you might have known that he would like an excuse to remain neutral, since his long journey must have made him very hungry."

"And still, I'm afraid I shall be listening with both ears," he answered, smiling. "I was born in southern Louisiana, and could pray and swear in French before I was three years old."

"Oh, I say! Hear that!" Peter Comynos exclaimed, with a quick gesture of delight. "Then, of course, you'll join our forces."

He began pouring out a torrent of French, which Holbrook answered with a ready ease, and the conversation grew animated. As if the mere speaking of the language were not enough for him, Comynos soon led the conversation to the latest news from his dearly loved Paris; and as Holbrook had been there late in the autumn before, he was able to retail bits of six-months-old gossip, which, from their intimate, personal character, came in the nature of news to the homesick artist.

"And D'Annunzio! I hear that they have called him home!" the young Greek exclaimed abruptly, as the talk lagged a little after Holbrook's rather vague and sketchy memories of the last Salon. "Paris will miss him."

"Not for long, perhaps! Did you see that cartoon in—I've forgotten which of the papers, but it represented D'Annunzio as the successful rival of Orpheus at last! Orpheus was charming only stones, while Gabriele had melted his creditors by the power of his song to letting him come home to Italy."

Comynos laughed, rather absently. During Holbrook's speech his face had worn a look of absorption, and when the guest had ceased speaking, the Greek leaned slightly forward, his eyes fixed upon Adele le Noir.

"Mademoiselle!"

She looked across the table at him, and he turned to Holbrook with a graceful little smile of apology.

"Miss le Noir mistook you for Mr. Scullin this afternoon, she told us! For that matter, I see no resemblance, since his face is bearded and yours is shaven, but as soon as I began speaking French with you there came to my mind an extraordinary likeness. 'Who is it who speaks French with just this accent?' I asked myself—then, suddenly, I knew—Ambrose Scullin!"

"But you must know, Mr. Comynos, that southern Louisiana is largely French, and perhaps Mr. Scullin learned the language there. In that case, you two would be likely to speak it with the same accent, wouldn't you, Mr. Holbrook?" she asked.

"Undoubtedly. Every one who learns it there speaks it in very much the same way, I believe," he answered; then, turning to the Greek, he continued: "Of course, the accent is bound to be distinctive—no matter how pure the diction. A native tongue on a foreign shore necessarily becomes, sooner or later, a different tongue. My French is very outlandish in Paris."

"Is Ambrose Scullin a Southern man?" Francis Wayne asked.

Miss le Noir hesitated a moment thoughtfully.

"Why, I don't believe I've ever heard him say!" she finally answered.

"Then he isn't!" Holbrook observed, so gravely that they all laughed.

"He's been Doctor van Zandt's right-

hand man for—years,” Miss le Noir went on, “so I rather fancy he belongs to New York originally.”

“The name seemed startlingly familiar to me when you first mentioned it this afternoon,” Holbrook said to her, as the attention of the others was drawn away just then to an absurd story that Mrs. Colman had launched. “I was almost as surprised as if you had come up to me and said, ‘Douglas Holbrook.’ Yet I have a peculiar memory for names, and I can associate this with no one—it’s just a sound.”

“You have probably heard his name called in some hotel lobby at a time when your mind was particularly alive to impressions—or you’ve had your bundle of laundry mixed with his at some distant date,” she answered, with a laugh.

Holbrook’s expression was still puzzled.

“I think the impression is rather stronger and—farther back than that! You say that he is Doctor van Zandt’s man of affairs?”

“Yes. He makes the rounds of Doctor van Zandt’s country places several times a year. There is a camp in the Adirondacks for patients who require a bracing air, and there’s another in Florida, and this place here. Mr. Scullin takes charge of them all.”

“Old Van Zandt pays the chap ten thousand dollars a year to *charm* his patients into staying exiled! That is the real truth of the matter!” Peter Comynos said with a laugh. “He is one of the most delightful fellows in the world! He comes to see you, and you—forget that you are on a desert island! He goes away, and nothing would keep you chained to the spot except the knowledge that he will come again!”

“He is like a knight in a picture book,” Cecelia Montrose said softly.

“Yes, he is! That’s the worst of Ambrose!” Mrs. Colman broke in, with a tragic look. “I can never be in his presence an hour without longing to be slender again!”

“He is handsome and charming, but

not more so than—some other people,” Adele said, with a reminiscent air.

“Well, the reason he looks so good to us is because we see so few people, perhaps,” Mrs. Colman admitted unwillingly, as she rose from the table.

Peter Comynos had already risen, and lighted a cigar, moving toward the door with the darting, arrowlike motion that Holbrook had before observed in him. On the threshold he paused, as if arrested by a sudden thought. He did not turn back, but stood still, quite patiently, with his head averted, until the little hunchback woman had come up with him; then he reached down and slipped her arm under his as he led the way to the portico.

“Bring coffee to Mr. Holbrook and me in the music room, Septimus, please,” Miss le Noir ordered, as the rest of the little party were disbanding. “Mr. Wayne writes a while each evening after dinner, and Mr. Farrel and Mrs. Colman sit up in their chairs and go to sleep!” she explained to Holbrook. “Mr. Comynos and Cecelia go out on the porch and look at the stars, or the moon, or whatever happens to be on for the evening!”

She led the way through the farther door of the dining room to a small apartment that was well to the back of the house, and fitted up, rather stiffly, with some old furniture of colonial design. Holbrook walked to the window and pulled aside the curtain. Outside was a small portico, not more than five feet square; and a luxurious grape arbor began at the end of this platform, running some distance down into the side yard and losing itself in the darkness.

“Do you call this the music room because you can hear the rain on the grape leaves?” Holbrook asked, as he turned around and ran his eyes about the room in vain search for a piano. “That sound makes a most soothing music—I always thought.”

The girl smiled.

“There was a grand piano in here—until I made them take it out,” she answered. “The room was entirely too small for the dignity, but the name has

clung to it." She busied herself over a table drawn up close beside the window, and bade Septimus, who had followed them with a tray, place their coffee there.

"The original purpose of the room was probably something much less pretentious," Holbrook remarked, with an interested glance around its rather cramped proportions. "It was probably the 'office' in days before the war."

"The 'office'?"

"All the old slave owners had one chamber of their mansions set apart to transact business in. Sometimes it was a detached building quite a distance from the house; and the glory of a young boy's life was to get old enough to sleep out in the office. Again, it was a small room like this, where the overseer would come for his daily interview, and where delinquent slaves were sometimes brought for a reprimand."

"This might have been such an apartment as you have in mind," the girl said thoughtfully, looking about her as if the old walls had taken on a new interest in her eyes, "but no slaves ever came here. This house was built by Newman Abbott."

"The abolitionist?"

"The great abolitionist! You know how he hated the South? Well, the story goes that when quite a young man, filled with a fiery zeal to spend his vast fortune in helping to rid his country of slaves, he came South to study conditions, and, as he was already well known as a rich young visionary who might be expected to do any sort of erratic thing, he conceived the idea of using an assumed name, thinking that he could get at the true state of affairs better if his identity were unknown. While traveling under this incognito, he met and became enamored of a girl—a creature as high-spirited and zealous as himself, but—on the opposite side."

Holbrook dropped a lump of sugar into his coffee, watching her face as she talked.

"It seems that her beauty quite swept him off his feet, for he was willing to keep up the deception of his identity

until after they were safely married, knowing that he would lose her if he disclosed his real name and mission. A month or two after they were married, she found out the truth—and never forgave him, or, rather, pretended that she did not. She was strong-willed and passionate, vowing that she would never go North with him to live, and that he should never come among her kinspeople here in the South; so, as a final compromise, when he saw, after several years of skirmishing, that she was in earnest, he built this beautiful house for her to live in. It was a hidden house, and she could live quite apart from the world."

"And he named it Pausilypon?"

"Yes. It became really his house of joy, for he was forced to be away from home for many months each year, and even during his short visits here, his wife always chose to surround herself in picturesque mystery. She was beautiful and—aloof, so that his passion for her was kept glowing through all the years; and, after a very long time, she finally consented to meet some of his friends from the North whom he wished to invite here to his *sans-souci* home."

"During this period it was his veritable Pausilypon. His choice spirits were about him. His hobbies had full play. He educated the negroes who worked on the place, and the influence of this is still felt, for he did it wisely, teaching them to do their work well."

"But Doctor van Zandt? How did the place come into his possession?" Holbrook asked, after a little silence.

"His father was one of the choice spirits whom Newman Abbott entertained here!"

"And he bought the house?"

"Yes; he bought it after the death of the owners. Doctor van Zandt inherited it."

"And," soberly, "has put it to a very beautiful use, it seems."

"You scarcely realize yet just how beautiful and good a place this is," she answered in a low voice, and Holbrook saw that her face was suddenly filled with sadness. "You asked me this

afternoon if it were not a sort of rest-cure place—"

"And you said no."

"I said no, because it is not! The rest is here, but not the cure! Doctor van Zandt sends to the other places of his the patients who will gain strength to go back to the busy world again. To this place he only sends those who will—not go back."

"Not go back!"

"Every one who comes here is under a death sentence! He sends to this place the people who have worked themselves past the limit—and they come just in time to enjoy a little space of quietude before they go! Nobody wishes to be hurled into eternity while his fingers are still clutching out after worldly gods! And it is the passion for these gods that he sends us here to get rid of—before we die! He calls it 'the quiver'—this madness that others know as ambition, and that fastens itself upon certain natures like a vampire."

"The quiver!"

"Yes; we were all in a quiver for something—Mr. Farrel for more millions—Francis Wayne for more light—Peter Comynos for the power to reach his ideals—"

"But you!" the man exclaimed impatiently. "How came you in such a company—*young*—" His voice broke.

She smiled sadly.

"That's just it! I was too young for the tasks I undertook, for—my ambition was almighty!"

He half rose from his chair. There was a gleam of anger in his face.

"But do you believe what this fool doctor tells you?" he demanded. "Why don't you get other advice? Travel! Try all the best doctors in the world!"

She shook her head, holding up her hand protestingly.

"Taking him at his word has been our salvation," she answered simply. "He told us that if we did as he said we should be able to get a true focus on the brief time allotted us now. We shall not spend it racing over the face of the earth vainly. We enjoy life here!"

"But the man is a monster to have told you!"

She smiled again.

"No, not cruel—only very, very wise! He knew that nothing less than the *finality* of the knowledge could induce us to give up the chase!"

There came across the man's brow a look of keen pain, and, as she saw it there, she held out her hand to him pleadingly. For the time they were not strangers; they were a primitive man and woman together, facing the primal cruelty.

"Do not feel too sorry for us," she begged. "We have found a calm, sweet peace."

"Peace?"

"Yes; we are very happy here—in spite of the loneliness that you found this evening." Then, with a brighter smile, she continued: "You can understand now why I was so eager for you to stay! I knew that they would enjoy having you here—and they did. I had a feeling, when I came up and saw your plight, that some good fairy had sent you here, where—if we can be of benefit to you—you can be of wonderful benefit to us, as well."

At these words the man started violently.

"But I should not have stayed!" he exclaimed. "I should not have allowed you to take me in without telling you—about myself. I am a stranger to you."

"But we—they all—saw that you were a man who could be trusted! A man carries his character in his face—in his *voice*—always. They only saw that you were a gentleman—from the class of society to which they had been accustomed; but I—"

"But you—"

"I saw more than that! I saw that you were kind—you were very good to the sick woman you brought here."

Outside, everything was still, save for the soft plashing of the raindrops against the grape leaves.

"I ought to be good to her," he said, in a low voice.

The girl looked at him curiously.

"Yet she isn't a near relative of yours, I feel sure," she said. "I

thought at first that she was your grandmother, perhaps, or an aunt——"

He made a sudden gesture with his hands, and she glanced at him again, startled by his expression. She was sitting quite close to him, and his chest was heaving rapidly. She almost imagined that she could hear his heart-beats—louder than the rain on the leaves outside.

"She is not a near relative—neither my grandmother, nor an aunt! The world looks upon me as a scoundrel! I am a man to be spit upon, for I live on her bounty. She is my wife!"

CHAPTER VI.

On the morning after Adele le Noir's interview with Holbrook in the little music room, she was the first one of the household astir, and, as Francis Wayne came out upon the piazza, and found her in her accustomed chair, with a book in her hand, he observed at once that she was looking quite ill again. She was as carefully dressed as usual, but the bit of scarlet ribbon that she always wore at her throat failed somehow to deceive the eye this morning into thinking that the warm glow was in her cheek.

"I'm afraid the excitement of a handsome young man to dinner didn't agree with you," he said, in a jesting tone, as he walked up to her chair.

The girl laid her book carelessly aside.

"I'm awfully upset, Matzoth."

He looked down at her in surprise.

"About that fellow being here?"

"Yes—except that he isn't here now! He went on last night to Talladougua."

"Last night! In that rain? But that was very foolish, wasn't it? He surely understood that there was plenty of room."

The girl dropped her eyes under his surprised scrutiny.

"Of course, I explained that there was plenty of room, but I don't know that it was so foolish for him to insist upon going—after he saw how I felt——" She hesitated, and the minister saw that she was worried and

confused. He half turned away, but she made another effort. "I want to have a little talk with you after breakfast, Matzoth—all of you together. We must take council."

She forced a smile as he looked at her in wonder; then, as they were interrupted at that moment by Mrs. Colman, who bore down upon them with the statement that she was starved, nothing more was said upon the subject beyond the simple statement, as they sat down to breakfast, that Mr. Holbrook had gone on to the village last night, and would be back some time during the course of the forenoon.

Perhaps something in the girl's expression, as she made her brief explanation, forbade the natural discussion that probably would have come up upon the subject of their charming guest the evening before; but at the conclusion of the meal, as they were all leaving the breakfast room, the sound of a motor car was heard at the front of the house, and there was a somewhat eager stirring in that direction.

It was only Doctor Cunningham, however, whose visit, late the evening before, had not been without its element of amusement to the members of the party.

For many years past Doctor van Zandt had entertained an enormous antipathy for mediocre physicians, whose one method of procedure, according to his conception, was to dose the patient on calomel until the day before the funeral. To avoid the possibility of this misfortune happening to any of the patients he sent away into his country places, there was always a nurse installed along with them, a nurse with the comfortable assurance of an M. D. degree—and strict orders that it should not be exercised! He would doctor his patients to suit himself, the great nerve specialist was wont to declare; and he had been careless enough, or malicious enough, to allow this preference of his to become known around the countryside wherever he happened to have a relay of convalescents, or even incurables, placed, so that the knowledge of his sentiments, together with weird tales of

his drugless methods, had caused his different strongholds to be surrounded by an atmosphere of wonder and aversion in the eyes of the local physicians.

It was for this reason that Doctor Cunningham had walked into the big hall the evening before with an expression of wonder and uncertainty upon his face. He was a well-bred, sensible man, however, for all his shabby looks and meager practice among the mountaineers, and, as the worst had been over the night before, he was able to return Adele le Noir's greeting this morning with great nonchalance, even bowing pleasantly to one or two of the others as they came out into the hall; then making straight for his patient's room with as much self-possession as if he were not feeling himself to be a foreign army landed upon a hostile shore, and determined never to lay down his arms—never, never, never!

"Will you come into the library now?" Adele asked the other members of the household, as the physician disappeared up the stairway. "All of you, please!"

They followed her into the room and sat down, as was their wont when talking things over, around the long, book-littered table. She closed the sliding doors behind them.

"I was anxious to talk with you before Mr. Holbrook comes back this morning," she went on rather nervously, as she took her place at one side; "and I feel sure that he will be here very early, for he will be anxious to know whether Doctor Cunningham thinks the patient can be moved any time soon."

"Well, of course he doesn't think so," Mrs. Colman said quickly. "It strikes me, Adele, that this young mountain physician doesn't nearly measure up to Doctor van Zandt's ideal fool."

"No—he doesn't. He can see that a railway journey would be nothing short of murderous just now."

"Then, by Jove, that decent chap will have to stay here for quite a while—is that the idea? For my part, I hope he will, for he jabbars French better

than any American I ever heard talk—except Scullin."

Peter Comynos spoke with enthusiasm, and the girl looked at him gratefully.

"Ambrose Scullin will be here in a few days now, surely," she said, "and we can, if we choose, make it possible for Mr. Holbrook to use this place as a hospital until the patient is able to be taken home. However——"

"Make it possible?" old John Farrel said emphatically. "What do you mean, Adele? I thought we had already placed the whole shebang at his disposal."

"There is an agreement between Doctor van Zandt and us, you remember, to the effect that no person distasteful to us shall come here," the girl said in a low voice. "That is why I wished to consult all of you this morning. Mr. Holbrook felt that he preferred to go on to the village last night when he saw that I was—shocked at the disclosure he made to me. The woman is—his wife!"

"His wife!"

A little quiver passed around the circle of people seated about the library table. On their faces was first a look of incredulity—then the quiver spoke of disgust.

"It is a hideous thing to have to discuss, but it is here before us," Adele continued, and Mrs. Colman, looking closely at the girl for the first time that morning, saw that she was pale beyond her usual pallor, and that her eyes looked as if she had not slept. "The patient—Mrs. Holbrook—may live on and on for months, critical as her condition now seems to be. He told me that for years she has had a great terror of becoming helpless and finally dying alone among hirelings and strangers. She was alone—quite alone in the world—when they were married, so there's nobody but him——"

She had seen the quiver of loathing and disgust, and it now seemed as if she were pleading for him—from a sense of its being her duty to state the case to them exactly as she had had it from him.

"Of course it would be inhuman to turn the man outdoors, Adele, under the circumstances. We wouldn't think of that."

Mrs. Colman had spoken in vigorous denial of this extreme measure, but her voice was so filled with the repulsion she felt that Francis Wayne looked at her in wonder. Usually it was her unflinching kindness that amazed him. She glanced up and caught the minister's eye.

"Don't look at me like that, Matzoth! You may preach all you please that sitting down at table with publicans and sinners is good for the soul, but one's stomach draws the line somewhere."

There was a faint ripple of laughter, in which Adele le Noir failed to join. Mrs. Colman looked at them, maintaining her position stoutly.

"I mean it! It would be nauseating to sit there three times a day opposite a man who could do—that!" Peter Comynos nodded his head in acquiescence. "It always nauseated me to see a sweet young girl married to an old man; but to see a strapping fellow like him—less than thirty-five years old, evidently, and vastly able to make his own living—married to a rich old—why, she's as old as Rider Haggard's 'She'!"

"I wonder why he did it?" Francis Wayne said thoughtfully, and at his innocent, wondering look, Peter Comynos gave a discordant laugh. It struck Adele then that the young Greek's bitterness was in direct ratio to his disappointment. He, too, had found their guest charming the evening before, and he now resented as much as he had formerly admired.

"Have you seen the size of the tires on that motor car they use?" he asked, his clear, rather halting enunciation causing the words to hold a peculiar meaning. "The Queen of England has tires like that on her limousine! I squeezed them—this way—in the mews at Windsor Castle one day last summer, and I thought, 'Zounds! it would be pleasant to glide through life on such tires!' Evidently this chap had such an idea as that."

"That's one thing I can't understand about people!"

It was the minister's quiet voice, and every one stopped to listen.

"Even if he *did* marry her for the sake of her pretty evident wealth, and I suppose there is no question about that—"

"None whatever, Matzoth!" Adele interrupted, as if she were nervously anxious to hold back no detail, no matter how repulsive. "He told me frankly that it was entirely for the sake of the money he should get! It would be a great absurdity, however, for him to claim anything else, since she was seventy-four when he married her—and he was twenty-eight!"

"Well, anyway," the minister went on, "he saw the luxury there, and he made up his mind to take it. How many men do the same thing in the course of the year? Fortune hunting, in one form or another, seems as inherent in humanity as breathing. It is something we see on every side—still we despise it."

"We despise the flimsy character that this thing indicates, Matzoth," said old John Farrel, in a pacifying tone. "We have an instinctive feeling—and a strictly *right* one—that any man who marries any woman for money is a cad; but when he marries a woman old enough to be his grandmother, the affair becomes, as Mrs. Colman says, a sickening thing."

"Yet, in truth, it is not nearly so sickening as when he marries a woman of his own age! Think of how much less disappointment is involved for the woman—how much less she has to suffer—and how many lies less the man has to tell!"

Again there was a faint laugh.

"I mean it," the little minister went on, digging the point of a paper knife into the expanse of blotting paper before him. "Instead of resenting what this fellow has done, and condemning it as a nauseating thing, I think we ought to admire him for his mercy—in not choosing some rich girl, instead."

"Oh, Matzoth!"

"Surely! The crime would have

been twofold in that case—the murder of his own manhood—from which he already suffers, no doubt—and the crushing of her heart. A woman always finds it out sooner or later—that she is unloved.”

Their eyes were fixed upon him, but in some mystification, and as he saw that their interest was keenly centered upon what he was saying, he tossed aside the paper knife and rose quietly to his feet.

“Listen, friends! My point is just this—suppose this decent-looking fellow, Holbrook, had driven up to our door yesterday afternoon with a fair, young woman as his wife, and we knew of our own knowledge that he had married her for money, pure and simple, how many of us would have shuddered when we learned that she was his wife?”

There was silence for a moment; then Mrs. Colman spoke.

“Not one of us, Matzoth, that’s the truth!” she answered, with hearty honesty.

“Yet a man married to an unloved young woman not only murders his manhood—he mangles it!”

As he spoke every eye was fixed upon his small, godlike face.

“Long before Pericles had thought out a scheme of marriage, God had given to humanity—love! A sin against marriage is no inconsiderable thing, but a sin against love is infinitely worse! This man, Holbrook, has made a farce of the marriage service, as many a man has done before and since; but in his case, most fortunately, I think, the farce of being in love was out of the question. Therefore, he is more honorable, much more honorable, than the man who marries a young woman with a lie on his lips.”

There was a brief, tense pause following this.

“But, Matzoth, the repugnance is there just the same—the physical loathing for such a man,” Mrs. Colman contended.

“Which goes to show that we—even we, who should learn Truth’s lessons fast, if we would learn them at all—

still shrink from the appearance of evil, rather than from evil itself.”

“The fellow looks all right,” Mr. Farrel threw in, still half grudgingly, although he, like the rest, had been stirred by the minister’s words. “Still, you can’t count on mere looks. Septimus said that he appeared to be pretty well wrought up over the illness of—his wife.”

“There may be other heirs, watching all the time for unkindness or neglect,” Peter Comynos suggested, his tone thoughtful now, rather than bitter. But at his words Adele le Noir straightened her shoulders and bent forward, flushing slightly.

“That can’t possibly be true,” she said, speaking with some unwillingness, but as if she were impelled by an inward consciousness that this was an injustice. “The woman is absolutely alone in the world, but for him. He told me this. She wanted the marriage service gone through with so as to insure her a protector, if she should live to be very old and helpless. That is why she married him—she had known him and his brother—all the family, I believe—for many years, and had always been very fond of the two boys. She fancied that they resembled their uncle, who was her lover—this one, Douglas, having features like him, and the other one having his voice, she always averred. But it seems that she was not altogether sentimental in her choice, for she selected the older one of the brothers to be her protector, because he had a less fascinating personality than the other one, who, it seems, was charming, absolutely, but not so steady.”

“He admitted this to you, Adele?” Mrs. Colman asked, her manner showing again the repugnance she felt.

“Yes, he admitted it. Why shouldn’t he? I had talked with him very freely, telling him—about why we live here as we do, and—somehow we didn’t seem like strangers to each other. I told him how much we wanted him to stay, and then, without any further delay, he made it known to me that he was, in a way, a pariah!

"I, too, was *horrified* when he announced that the woman he brought here—that old, *old* creature—was his wife; and he told me these other things then. He has been virtually an out-cast from society ever since the day he married her—his own home town being the first to cast a stone, of course. But it has been just the same everywhere, he says. His own father died of shame—then they went away, and traveled everywhere—making friends nowhere, because nobody would make friends with a man in his position. He is looked upon as a cad—a scoundrel—some people even professing to believe that he hypnotized the poor little old woman into marrying him. He is accused of having kidnaped her, taken advantage of her failing wits, and married her before she knew what she was about—everything!

"Of course, after he realized that he could never take his place again among people, he went to the other extreme—you might tell that from looking at him—and he is a sort of wandering recluse. He goes everywhere, but he mingles with no one. He seldom even gives any one a chance to be friendly with him; and I'll say this in his defense—he was most reluctant about staying here last night, even until after dinner! He would never thrust himself upon any one."

"Well, even *that* certainly changes the aspect of the case," Mr. Farrel declared, with a touch of levity. "These charm-pensioners are usually irresistible, in their own esteem."

"Oh, he is not in the least that kind of man!" she declared. "But why should I tell you this, when you know it quite as well as I do? Each one of you was charmed with him, and saw that he is, in every sense, a gentleman! No matter what he was when he married her—and he must have been pretty bad—I know that this long period of isolation must have changed him! He hardly seems to deserve it now, but he makes no plea at all in self-defense. He says frankly that he is a pariah—a spit-upon man."

As she ceased speaking her voice was

trembling slightly; and old man Farrel moved his bony fingers thoughtfully through his hair.

"By George, your spiel is more pathetic than even Matzoth's was, Adele!" he half whispered, but the girl's cheeks suddenly flamed.

"Don't think that I'm pleading his cause except from a standpoint of common duty," she begged, rising as if she were about to withdraw from the little conference. "The woman may be dying."

"And if she is not—we are," Francis Wayne said solemnly. "It seems to me that the actual good that comes to us from the knowledge that our days are numbered lies in this new light we get. We see everything with a different focus. Let us try to get a charitable focus on this fellow—shall we—no matter what he's done?"

"He suffers—I know that, for I can always feel when another person carries a burden of pain," Cecelia Montrose ventured timidly, speaking for the first time. Comynos, by her side, looked at her with a tinge of pity.

"Of course, we'll be decent to the fellow, petite," he said, half under his breath.

"He certainly looks the gentleman. So far as I am concerned, I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt—even though there appears to be no shadow of a doubt," Mr. Farrel laughed.

"And I, of course," Mrs. Colman consented, as she saw the minister's eyes fixed upon her as if he were waiting for her to speak. "It really makes it much less nauseating when one is convinced that he has never had to *pretend*—"

"I'm glad—friends!" Francis Wayne's face was beaming. "And I hear his car coming! Shall one of us go out and say something civil to him?"

They had flung open the door, and, as they trooped out into the hall, the gleam of the big, silvery car was seen winding slowly along the driveway.

"Let Adele tell him that we'll be glad to have him stay—that we want him to stay," Mrs. Colman said quickly, for

the expression of relief on the minister's face made her ashamed of her half-heartedness. "She's hostess here—besides, she knows him better than we do."

"Will you, Adele? He'll probably prefer talking with you!"

But when they turned back to the library with this suggestion, a moment later, they found that Adele had disappeared.

CHAPTER VII.

A week passed, and Doctor Cunningham, coming each day to the still-mystifying house on the mountaintop, saw that he had been decidedly on the safe side in giving a noncommittal prognosis in the case of his patient. Another week and he saw that the perfect rest, the mountain air, and the daily dole of strychnia were doing an amazing work with the frail body. The patient was growing stronger with each visit of the amazed physician.

Gradually it became the custom for the three women in the house to drop in each day for a few minutes at the side of the invalid's bed; and after they had all seen her, and could speak of her to Holbrook as "Miss Jane," the first repulsive strangeness of the situation had seemed to wear away.

Of the entire company, perhaps Peter Comynos found it hardest to be polite to a man who had done, according to his ethics, a disgustingly ugly thing. Comynos had left Greece early in his boyhood, and had been sent to school in France, but he still recalled with a shudder the mental picture he had always retained of what an old woman was like. In his own country and in Italy, where he had spent much of his life, a woman past forty was a witch—a hideous thing with withered features, and a caved-in mouth like the crater of an extinct volcano.

He and Cecelia Montrose frequently argued the matter over in the long, quiet talks they had together every day.

"Age is a cruel thing!" he was wont to say, with a shudder of repulsion. "I don't know that our doom is without recompense, after all, Cecelia!"

There was a great, bare room, a north chamber, so cold in winter that no especial use had ever been found for it, which Comynos had fitted up as a studio, and in which he and the weird little creature who had been his model ever since he had come to Pausilypon spent all the long hours of the morning. It was here that their gravest, as well as their gayest, talks took place.

"Life is always hideous when too long drawn out! Will you love me, Cecelia, when I am dead?" he asked impetuously one morning, as he and the little crooked-backed woman sat alone in the big, gloomy apartment. He had worked at a picture before him until his hand was trembling, and he suddenly threw down his brush, turning to her with his impulsive demand. At his query, unusual, but full of a sort of whimsical eagerness, she raised her face to him, glowing with its voluptuous, Sappholike beauty.

"What other hope have I?" she asked, in a low voice, her loveliness seeming to mock the pathos in her tones. "To love you when you're dead—and to be loved by you after I have laid down—this!"

She was sitting close to the canvas, for it was rest hour, and she pointed to the picture he had made of her ugliness.

"Aye, when we are dead! It will be so easy then, Cecelia!"

She flinched at the cruelty that she imagined lay in his words, but he saw the quiver of pain, and bent above her, a passion of sorrow in his long, dark eyes.

"Not that—not that, petite! I mean that all love will be easy then. No illness, no ugliness, no weakness—no age!" Then, quickly: "I loathe an old person, Cecelia!"

Her eyes twinkled at the characteristic abruptness and honesty of his words.

"But sometimes the face of an old person—the smile, is like a blessing," she answered. "Think of Leo Thirteenth."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"But I am not thinking of a smile,"

he insisted, with a certain air of perversity. "I was thinking of a smirk! Isn't that what you call it? Holbrook's wife, Cecelia! If he is a cad to have married her, what is she? Has that phase of the affair never presented itself to your imagination? Ugh! Age, sweet and calm, is cruel enough, but old age that has not learned life's lessons—that smirks, and minces, and prinks—is loathsome! I should think he would hate her!"

"But she is not like that—I have seen her!" the girl interposed quickly. "She is a tiny, wizened creature, with snowy hair and a smile as placid as—as that of Leo. Adele told us that first morning—don't you remember—that she was alone in the world, and wanted a protector?"

He shrugged his shoulders again.

"But anyway, it is a hideous thing! It must be like looking at a wound to see them together—certainly for any one who might chance to care for him! And even for her, it is pathetic. Is it not a pity that she could not have died forty years ago when there was some one to wait?"

Following, as she always did, the train of his thoughts, she instantly forgot the old woman in the far wing of the house.

"Pietro! Are you glad that you will never be old?" she asked softly.

He nodded his head.

"I am an egoist, so, of course—yes. Other people want to live for the sake of their children or their children's children, or"—with a whimsical smile—"to see if airships will ever be perfected. I do not care for any of these. I want the world's beauty while I am here—and I am going away from that all too soon, petite—and I want to be pleasing to those who look at me, to do great things—then go away quickly, before the echo of the applause has died out."

He was close beside her, and she laid her hand gently upon his smoothly brushed hair.

"Pietro, I adore you," she whispered.

As she was responsive to every

change in his moods, so was he quick to follow her changes.

"And your face is like moonlight!" he answered passionately, but the passion was sorrow, not love.

"I am praying all the time that I shall die first," she went on quickly, a gleam of joy lighting her face at the bare thought. "Then, after I am dead, you will remember my face—forgetting all else."

He snatched her hand from his head where it still rested, and pressed it between his own until the tender flesh was pale and bloodless. Then he crossed the room and lifted a newly framed picture from its heavy wrappings in an obscure corner.

"This came yesterday. You have not seen it in its frame."

It was a small portrait of her, just her face and slender neck, emerging from a cloud of pale-green draperies. Into her fine, wavy black hair he had painted all the mystery of the moonlight, and into the full red lips all the secrets of love. She was not looking at the picture, but at the black-and-gold name plate on the frame:

"My Mistress!"

"It is the mistress to whose eyebrow all my sonnets shall be indited, from now henceforth," he said with a smile; then, seeing her look of rapture as she took in the import of the title, he added, more gravely: "It was the only name I could call it, Cecelia! It is sweet and old-fashioned, going back to—Elizabethan times; besides, it is true! It is the lady of my desire."

"It is but a face," she exclaimed sadly.

"Many a man has less than a perfect face to satisfy him, to act as his guiding star."

"Do you mean, Pietro, that this face can be to you an ideal that will replace the—*woman* a man should have at his side?"

"A man of my nature could not have a woman at his side, Cecelia! She must be in his arms! That—that is why I cannot love you as you are now! A dispassionate lover might stay at your side a lifetime, caring naught for the

little crooked body, caring much for the sweet soul—but neither would this satisfy the woman you are! He could never take you to the heights—as I should do if I could.”

“No! No!”

“Dear girl, don’t you know that if your body matched this face I should hold you in an ecstasy like that of Solomon’s peerless song? You should be my mistress in truth, my beloved, but your warm, red lips should be cold with a lying denial; for the drawing back of a woman is what gives me life, and the coming close is what brings death! Yet some time, sooner or later, I should force the lips to cease their prohibition, and I should want to find even the death of my desire, for life is not life without it.”

She was silent for a long time, and when she spoke again, her voice was languid with the despair that has grown old and familiar.

“Pietro, I must go now. I am so tired.”

Her words brought him back to earth. He opened his lips to offer a demurrer, for the morning’s work was only half finished, but his eyes met hers, and the word of remonstrance was unspoken.

“Yes—yes, petite!”

He walked to the door, with his quick, direct movement, and opened it for her; then he looked at her face only a moment as she lingered on the threshold, turning his eyes away as she moved slowly down the corridor; for he knew that it gave her pain to feel that he was watching her as she walked.

Her footsteps had died away, and he was still standing in the doorway, leaning against the framework and feeling a little sense of desolation since his usual morning’s work had been taken away from him, when he heard a man’s firm tread coming down the hallway, and, looking up in some surprise, saw Douglas Holbrook.

His first impulse was to make some friendly greeting, and let the man pass on, for he despised, while he could not dislike, Holbrook, and the anomaly of

the sentiment made him uncomfortable. But as the strange and mystifying guest came closer this morning, the Greek saw that his face was very pale, and that it wore much of the same expression that Cecelia’s tragic little face had worn a moment before, as she left him. The hard and bitter expression that he had worn upon the day he had come into their midst had softened somewhat under the ease and friendliness of their attitude toward him, but there was in his face now a new hurt, as if something cruel and unendurable had been added to his burden.

Comynos stepped from the doorway into the hall.

“But you are a stranger, indeed, in this wing of the house!” he said, and, as Holbrook glanced up in surprise, the young Greek saw that his preoccupation had been so great as to render him half oblivious of what was going on. At the sound of Comynos’ voice, however, he looked up and gave a short, nervous laugh.

“I’m so much of a stranger that I’ve—why, I believe I have lost my way!” He looked around him in a bewildered fashion. “I have been out in the flower garden to gather some roses for Mrs. Holbrook, and I think I must have confused the back staircases as I came in.”

“They are confusing—all old, rambling buildings are rather hard to get straight in one’s mind at first, I think; but, since you are in the wrong wing, won’t you make it the right one by coming into my studio for a visit?”

Holbrook looked surprised.

“I didn’t imagine that you had fitted up a regular studio,” he said, pausing at the threshold, and looking into the room with interested eyes. “I thought that the mandate had been to sit still in the sunshine and see that life was joy.”

Comynos laughed.

“Oh, I work! The old man doesn’t object to a moderate amount of work under normal circumstances, even now. It is only the frenzied labor, under unnatural conditions, that he forbids, and that has—put us where we are.”

The door had closed behind them, and the artist was motioning his vis-

itor to a high-backed chair near the window. A low marble seat, with gar-goyle ends, had been placed on the opposite side of the room, and, as Holbrook glanced at the still wet canvas, he saw the bench reproduced there.

"May I look?" he asked, for he had a vital appreciation for the beauty in pictures. "By Jove! Alma-Tadema might have painted that marble!"

The Greek looked pleased.

"These are the only good pictures I have ever been able to do while I was sober," he said, with simple truthfulness.

Holbrook looked at him in amazement.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean that *that* was my trouble! I must always be in a state of exaltation when I painted, and I drank a great deal of spirits to bring about this state. Had no one told you about it?"

"No."

"It is that which is killing me—cirrhosis, they call it. It means that my liver is as hard as another man's heart is always supposed to be." He gave a short laugh.

"You, with cirrhosis of the liver?"

"Yes. When Doctor van Zandt took me in hand I was in a fair way not to live a month. I was mad with the desire to paint a picture that would take Paris by storm next year—then Rome! I was working night and day—praying, cursing—drinking, until the time came that I could paint no more! I locked myself into my room, fighting devils. The worst of them all was *despair*, for I knew that Paris would not know me next year unless I worked fast! I braced myself against the devils by drinking more, for without it I could not work—my dreams were very beautiful and my humanity could not keep pace. Then, one day, when I was at the end—the very end of mortal endurance, Anthony van Zandt came and told me that I would never exhibit in Paris again! It was no use! All was over for me!"

"As he told Miss le Noir that she would never sing again!"

"Yes, and old John Farrel that he

would never make another dollar! He had corralled them, and sent them here! He told me about the place, and asked me if I cared to come. It was only a matter of a short time, whether I came here or stayed there, but the idea of it seemed restful to me, so I decided that I would come. As I had ceased to paint I ceased to drink, for I have never been a common drunkard for the love of the thing itself.

"Then I came on here and found Cecelia—Miss Montrose! She has the most beautiful face I have ever seen, and I was seized with a great desire to paint her. She was gracious enough to act as my model, and I enjoyed painting her. I kept on, going first from little sketches into more serious work, but always with the knowledge that I was only amusing myself. I had no thought of an exhibit hanging over my head—I had no far-away dreams of a beauty greater than the beauty before me, so I painted without the drinking! I have never painted so well!"

As Comynos' voice died away, in a strange little hollow laugh at the irony of fate, Holbrook turned to the large canvas beside which he had been standing. Beyond a glance at the beauty of the marble seat in the picture, he had not had time to look, for the story the artist had told him had been poured out with characteristic quickness and spontaneity. He turned to it now and saw that it was a figure of Cecelia, almost life size, seated upon the marble bench, and peering over into a placid pool of water at her feet. She had caught the reflection of her own perfect face, and of the glistening bow of a small Cupid hovering close behind her, on the back of the bench. But she had caught more than this, for the little god's eyes were fixed with surprise and horror upon the cramped, high-standing shoulders of the woman whose face and heart might have made so glittering a target! She could see that his arrow was not aimed at her! Love would pass her by!

There was glorious beauty, immeasurable ugliness, and a deathless tragedy in the soul that lay beneath the picture, yet it was a wonderful thing—as cruel

in its loveliness as life had been to the woman who posed for it!

Holbrook gazed at it for a long while—then he turned fiercely to the man at his side.

"How could you do it?" he asked.

For answer Comynos walked across the room and picked up the smaller picture—the portrait of the matchless face.

"I made this one first, and it satisfied me—it is so very beautiful," he said simply, "but she must have the other, too! She made me paint her as she is; and when it is finished, if the critics say it is good, she will send it to some one of the great galleries, where many people will see it every day. The strong, clean-limbed ones who pass by will look at it and say, 'Thank God for our straight backs and sturdy shoulders.' The little distorted creatures like her will look at it—and understand. But they, too, will be thankful, for they will know that they are not alone, and that some one else has gone before, knowing their burden as they know it!"

Holbrook said nothing. His eyes were riveted upon the beauty of the smaller picture before him. Less a picture of a living woman, it appeared to him then, than the symbolic face of Love, with all its mystery, its happiness, and its passion.

"It is Love, as nature ordained it," Holbrook finally said, speaking aloud. Comynos caught his meaning.

"It is for nature's favorites, this kind of love—for those whose souls are not so distorted that the face of Love turns away, white and frightened, at the deformity it sees."

"Or the deformity may be in the life—not in the soul," the other man amended quickly; "yet the little blind god cannot see the difference! Tell me, what are you going to call this other picture?"

He indicated the larger canvas, which even to his untrained eye had the appearance of a master's work.

"The Burden Bearer."

Holbrook wavered a moment, as if debating in his mind just what he

should say. Finally he spoke, in a low voice.

"That is a very good name," he said simply.

"Every one who has ever borne such a burden will understand it," the artist returned, gazing at the canvas with a sort of half-awed, wondering affection.

"Yes, as well as those who bear burdens of a different sort," Holbrook responded, squaring his shoulders and reaching out for the package of roses, which were lying in a folded newspaper on the table. The young Greek glanced toward him in surprise.

"You're not going?" he asked, half regretfully.

"I—I must!" There was a strange, unguarded light in Holbrook's eyes as he spoke. "Your picture is very wonderful, but—very cruel. It has served to remind me of a burden which of late has not been borne very nobly—" His words faltered, his voice finally trailing away into silence, but the gleam of the unguarded light in his eyes had shone full upon the artist's inquiring, sympathetic glance of wonder. Its unconscious abandon seemed to melt the conventional barriers between the two men.

"You mean, of course, that your unnatural marriage has distorted your life?" the Greek asked, with his characteristic directness and simplicity.

Holbrook flinched only for a moment.

"It was distorted before I came here, but it was not blackened," he answered, the strained, hesitating quality of his voice telling much more than the words implied. "I never tried to make any one else bear the burden with me—I never before attempted to make any woman conscious of my being. I ought to go away from here! I know it!"

"You fear that a serious love affair may—"

"Serious love affair!" the other man interrupted harshly. "How could any woman love me? How could a woman love a man she cannot even respect? How could I want a woman to share this ignominy? I ought to go away from this place!"

"But, good God, what a situation! A man in your position and a woman in hers! I don't need to be told that you are in love with Adele le Noir! Surely——"

"Surely I ought to go away! I should never have stayed!"

Comynos drew a step closer, stretching out his hand with a warm impulse of sympathetic understanding, and clutching the other man's arm. Holbrook turned his eyes away from even the sympathetic light, and for a long minute neither man spoke; then, breaking the tense, shamefaced silence, Holbrook turned to the artist, holding out his hand.

"Thank you—and forgive my heroics!" he begged, with a sort of boyish straightforwardness, brightening under the easy, quick-changing smile that greeted the words.

"Don't think of apologizing to a Greek for 'heroics,'" Comynos returned, waving the matter aside as if to indicate that it was already among the forgotten things. But he held for a moment the hand that the other man had extended to him, and, for the first time, there was honest heartiness in the grip.

CHAPTER VIII.

Before Holbrook had been at Pausilypon two days, he discovered that Adele le Noir seemed to find a peculiar pleasure in making her nominal position as mistress of the household carry in its wake something of reality. It was only a make-believe housewifeliness at best, but she seemed to throw a deal of earnestness into it, devoting many of the cool morning hours to its cause.

On the morning after Holbrook's visit to the studio, he went out, as usual, to the flower garden after breakfast for the bunch of pink roses which the wizened little creature upstairs had learned to expect daily. The bright, fresh color of the flowers always brought a smile to her thin face, and she had Marie place the vase close to the bed or to her wheel chair, where she might turn her head a little and look at them all through the long day.

Coming back from the rose garden this morning, he met Adele le Noir, with a generous-sized fruit basket upon her arm, going into the grape arbor.

"The birds have been there before you," he called out to her as she disappeared under the shadow of the dense foliage. "I walked through the arbor this morning on my way after these flowers, and I saw that there was scarcely a full bunch left."

She laughed, coming back to the entrance of the arbor.

"Well, do you think we're entitled to any more than the birds choose to leave for us?" she asked. "Anyway, I am quite willing for them to have the best of the harvest. Lay your roses down in this shady place, and come with me if you like. You can reach higher than I can."

He deposited the flowers on the vine-shadowed step, and followed her—his heart in a tumult over the prospect of a quiet half hour; yet all the time he was wishing that these quiet half hours were accepted by her less as a matter of course. He felt certain that if Comynos or Francis Wayne had been standing at the steps as she passed on her way to the grape arbor, she would just as readily have asked either of them to come with her and reach the higher bunches. Her manner toward him, so far as he could discern, was exactly as it was toward the other men in the house, and instead of being grateful for this—he who for years had been regarded as a sort of half monster—he was unhappy and dissatisfied. He knew that he wanted to see the light in her eyes that should shine for no other man.

He followed her silently until they had reached the far end of the arbor, where she deposited the basket on a wooden bench, and drew on her long brown gloves.

"What are you going to do with them?" he asked, slipping his hand into his pocket for his knife. "Are you going to gather that basket full?"

"Yes—and the cook is going to make some preserves—or," vaguely, "whatever it is that they make out of grapes."

I don't know exactly what it is, but I know that it smells most delicious when it's cooking."

He gave a little laugh at the naïve remark, but she turned her eyes upon him, filled with earnestness.

"It sounds silly, doesn't it—or in a society woman it would seem a pose, but do you know that never until this summer have I smelled preserves cooking?"

"And is it really so delicious?" he asked, his own face suddenly as sober as hers.

"Delicious? Why, there's nothing like it! There is a little balcony back of my bedroom upstairs, and some afternoons when it's too hot to sleep I go out there and try to read, but I can never get my mind on a book if there happen to be preserves cooking in the kitchen! I lean over the edge of the balcony instead, and drink in that sweetness until I'm giddy."

"And yet it doesn't remind you of bygone days?" he asked softly.

She shook her head.

"No. I've never had the things it reminds me of—nor can I ever have, now."

"Cannot?"

"No. It speaks of a big, roomy house like this—that sweetness does! A busy mother—I never had a mother after I was six years old—and a brood of noisy children, else why the preserves? In such a house—in such a home, rather—the summers would be one long golden joy. But the winters, too, would be filled with delight, for there would be a Christmas tree—I never had a Christmas tree—"

Her voice struggled with the lump in her throat, and after a moment she mastered it.

"If I were a woman just beginning life—as I should be at my age, instead of ending it—I should have *that* for my goal—just to sit on a cool balcony in summertime and smell the preserves cooking! There would be great quantities of them, for the house would be very large—and full. Christmas would be what it was meant to be."

There was a little pause before Holbrook spoke.

"And do you think, then, that for you it was not meant to be a time for extra work, additional practicing, rehearsals, and all the labor as well as the glory that goes to make up the life of a busy singer?"

She gave a little shudder.

"Those times come back to me as a nightmare," she cried impetuously. "When ambition, such as mine was, clutches a *young* person it is a madness, Mr. Holbrook! No normal woman should have it!"

"But do you think that we have the ordering of that?" he asked gravely. "Don't you think that ambition is either given or not given in our original make-up, and can no more be uprooted than our eyes can change their color?"

She shook her head, in decisive negation.

"No, I think we can be placed upon the wrong trail and follow it until it leads quite away from the light. I was an orphan, too proud to live in a sort of half charity with any of my relatives; and when the quality of my voice was discovered—it was wickedly early—I clutched at it as a means of release. I worked and studied frantically, and when the time came for my public appearance the work and frenzy had become habit."

"I have been convinced, from seeing it in others, that ambition can fasten itself upon one most mercilessly," he observed, after a moment of silence.

The girl looked at him curiously.

"And have you never known ambition yourself?" she asked.

"Personally, no—not in the way you mean. We were an enormously proud family—the Holbrooks—but there was no great amount of personal ambition in my brother or me, I am sure. My father always taught us to be clean morally, and to remember our Revolutionary ancestors! It was an obsession with him—that family pride—and we grew up caring more for it than for anything else, perhaps."

The girl's face crimsoned, for it occurred to her that he must be willfully

lying, since he had already made known to her that he had sold himself into slavery for wealth; but she veered back quickly to her own story, as if she had been interrupted unwillingly.

"One portion of the game—my game of ambition—which now seems so despicable to me, was the pretense. Do you know that in every field of artistic endeavor, the fever of pretense has broken out like a pestilence? It is the madness to be talked about that furnishes the ground for it to fester in! My manager had this taint to an unusual degree. When I was not striving to sing better, he had me in a fever of excitement over press agents! I had to work my brain overtime to give the newspapers startling things to tell about me—my extravagances, my fastidious tastes, my weird aversions."

"Yes. That's the worst of a tawdry, cheap reputation, I suppose. A sincere worker must needs stir up an equal amount of noise."

She nodded her head.

"Exactly! The whole fight is filled with greed, jealousy, egotism, and hate! And to exploit such a gift—the gift of song! Is it any wonder that Fate closes iron fingers around our throats and bids us stop forever?"

"Yet some women go on at the game until they're old," he said.

She made a little impetuous gesture.

"I know, but I'm glad that I was forced out of the struggle early! It was so hideous! Do you know, if I should live even to go back out into the world, I should sing just as that bird is singing?" Outside, in a slender young elm tree close by the end of the arbor, a mocking bird was trilling happily, lifting its song as if in sheer joy of life on this golden morning. "What does he care for our applause? What does he care for the possibility of singing better than his neighbor in a nearby tree. He is happy, for he has his voice—he has his nest! And, oh—the nests! That bird is better off than I have ever been—until I came here."

"It seems—cruel," Holbrook exclaimed under his breath, but the girl faced him bravely.

"Yet think how much better that we should have been stopped while there was a little time left to enjoy! I consider Doctor van Zandt a wondrous benefactor. It is true that he can give us only a brief span of happiness, but how much better this glimpse of light than nothing! We at least shall go away knowing that the mere act of living might have been beautiful! Mr. Farrel realizes now that a trout stream can hold charms Wall Street never dreamed of; Mrs. Colman is happier in listening to Matzoth's gentle appeals than in listening to all the applause of the past twenty years combined. And Matzoth has learned from her as well. She is eminently sane and full of kindness. In the old days, when she was on the stage, I have been told by some of her intimates of those times, she was always willing to lend her finery to some poor little chorus girl who might be invited to supper at Sherry's; or she always saw to it that a stage hand who had mashed his finger with a hammer had an antiseptic dressing put on. Matzoth has learned from her *human* sympathy for the poor little chorus girl; and he has gained a clearer understanding of the nature that can swear over a mashed finger. If he could go back into the world, he would be a saner, more practical worker—dear little Matzoth!"

"He's a brick, anyway," the man pronounced heartily.

"They're all that!" she returned. "Mr. Farrel and Mr. Comynos—poor Cecelia, who is, of us all, the most unfortunate. She has always been a thorn in the side of her proud, ambitious mother, and she has found her niche here—at last! But I'm glad for her sake that the niche will not need to be filled very long. She is the only one of us who has not placed herself in this position, for she has always been a frail little being, whose life was a wonder to those who knew her. Some morning we shall awake and find that Cecelia will wake no more—which will be the happiest fate of any for her, for she loves Peter Comynos!"

"Yes, I know! I paid a visit yesterday to the studio, and Comynos

showed me the pictures. It is most unhappy—for him as well as for her."

"The pictures are wonderful! Don't you think so?"

"I do; and the conditions under which he painted them are much more wonderful."

She looked at him with a shade of surprise, and Holbrook fancied that she was pleased.

"Did Mr. Comynos himself confide these things to you?" she asked.

"Yes; and I am willing to concede that your Doctor van Zandt is a magician when it comes to a case like that. But I still think that some method less—cruel could have obtained as good results."

She shook her head.

"No—he knows the temperament that spurs itself on until it drops, and he knows that it takes a radical measure to work a change in such a nature. I am sure that each one of us thinks he did the right thing in telling us the truth at once."

She sprang up and went hastily to work, and Holbrook, sensing her feeling that she could not bear to discuss the matter any longer, tactfully changed the subject. He helped her gather the grapes, and when the basket was full, they made their way back, very slowly, toward the house.

At the head of the back stairs they came upon Marie, who glanced at Holbrook with a little gleam of pleased excitement.

"Doctor Cunningham has just come, sir, and says Miss Jane is so much better this morning that she may go out upon the front piazza upstairs and take the air. He thinks it will be good for her, if I am very careful and see to it that she does not exert herself at all. There is no one upstairs now who could help me with her chair, so I thought I would come and see if I could get Henry."

"Henry is busy with the car, Marie, putting on those new tires, so that we can be all ready to start out again as soon as Doctor Cunningham gives the word. I'll go up and help you with her chair."

"The doctor thinks that she will be able to travel now in a very few days," the maid kept on, while Adele le Noir stood slightly to one side, pulling off her long gloves. "He said that she might go to-morrow if she looks as well then as she does to-day."

"Then, if Mr. Scullin should come, we can go," he answered, turning to the girl who had started off in the direction of the kitchen, the basket of grapes on her arm. "Miss le Noir, will you go up with me and see Mrs. Holbrook for a little while? You know there are many times that she can really enjoy seeing people, and Marie says that she is feeling unusually well this morning."

"Yes, I'll be glad to go," she answered, handing the fruit over to one of the maids who chanced to be passing at the moment. As they gained the upper floor the girl went on out to the piazza to see that there was a pleasant, shady place all ready for the invalid's chair.

Holbrook went into the sick woman's bedroom. She was close beside the window, lying back upon the pillows of her wheel chair, but as he came close and she saw who it was, she attempted to raise one feeble hand in welcome. He bent over and caught the fluttering fingers, brushing them with his lips.

"You'll enjoy the fresh morning air, Miss Jane," he said. "And see—I've brought you your pink roses!"

She smiled at him languidly as he held open the door with one hand and grasped the foot of the chair with the other. In a few minutes the thick tires on the wheels were rolling comfortably into the sheltered corner of the porch which Adele had declared to be the least exposed to the brisk morning breeze.

"Thank you, Douglas! You're a very good nephew," the old woman exclaimed gratefully, and at the word, spoken so naturally in the keen, piping treble, the face of the girl standing near suddenly went crimson.

"I believe I have told you of the amnesia from which she suffers," Holbrook said, turning to Adele and speaking in a low voice. "She always refers to me as her nephew."

The maid had disappeared, and the little old woman was letting her eyes wander absently around at the close-standing trees and the tall white columns before her. After a short period of silence, during which the voices of the two people beside her did not penetrate to her dulled understanding, she stirred again.

"Douglas!"

"Yes, Miss Jane?"

"Douglas, what place is this—Boston?"

"No—not Boston. It is the home of some very kind people who were good enough to take us in."

"Then it isn't Boston?"

"No."

She sighed wearily.

"I thought it was—home," she said.

"We'll be going home in a day or two, Miss Jane." He turned, then, to the girl.

"I hope your Mr. Scullin will not be delayed much longer," he said. "Besides the necessity of my seeing him, on account of the business end of it, I feel a curiosity about a man whose name reminds me of—something that I can't in the least remember! It's queer, isn't it?"

She smiled.

"It's queer why he delays this way. He is more than two weeks overdue."

Before Holbrook could have time to hazard a guess as to the cause of the delay, the screen door behind them opened, and Henry, his chauffeur, asked him to come to the garage and pass judgment upon the condition of one of the new tires.

"Go on, I'll stay here until Marie comes back," Adele told him, as he glanced rather hesitatingly at the sick woman; and, with a word of thanks, he disappeared with the servant.

The girl listened to his footsteps echoing down the hall, then watched his tall figure until it had disappeared under the clump of trees along the garden fence. She had walked to the column nearest her, and was leaning lightly against it as she strained her eyes after him. The old woman, looking around and seeing that he had disappeared, be-

gan to stir uneasily. The girl crossed back to the chair.

"Where is Douglas?" she questioned, her faded eyes filled with a quick expression of worry. "Has he gone away?"

"Just to see about the car! He'll be back in a little while."

The wrinkled face gradually settled back into its look of serenity.

"He's all I have in the world to take care of me," she said, with a pathetic quiver in her thin voice. "But he is always so very good—my nephew!"

At the repetition of this word the girl found her face flushing again. Almost before she knew what she was saying, she had bent forward eagerly to the shrunken figure in the chair.

"Say that again!" she exclaimed, half whispering; and then, with a groping wits of the other woman showed their bewilderment in her eyes, "Call him your *nephew*! When you say it that way—so naturally—I can almost believe it is true!"

There was a moment's strained silence, for the tiny old woman could not fathom the girl's impetuous speech, then the wire door leading to the hall opened, and Cecelia Montrose came out. Adele saw at a glance that she had overheard the half-mad speech of a moment before, for her lovely face was filled with a pitying sorrow. Neither of them spoke until Marie came and wheeled the chair to the farther end of the porch, where there was a shadowy little patch of sunshine.

"I was standing in the doorway and overheard you, Adele," the little hunchback said, when the two young women were alone. "I am sorry."

Adele dropped down upon the bamboo couch in the corner.

"It doesn't matter," she answered dully. "Nothing matters."

"I said I was sorry, but I am glad," Cecelia Montrose kept on, as if she had not heard the other girl's listless words. "It gives me a chance to tell you something I've been longing to say."

"To tell me something?"

"Pietro says that this man loves you!"

The other girl shook her head.

"What difference could that make?" she asked, in a dull monotone. "*She* is there!"

"Difference!" Cecelia's face was suddenly alive with feeling. "The difference between life and death, silly girl! Do you know that the doctor has said they may go at any time now?"

"Yes, but Mr. Holbrook is going to wait until Ambrose Scullin comes! There is business to be settled, of course, but if he goes to-day or a month hence—it is all the same to me."

"And yet you love him! If you were starving for your love's return, as I am, you could not so deliberately throw away a chance for even a moment's happiness! What does his marriage amount to—in the face of your love? Nothing!"

"It is the thing that would stand in the way—even if he feels as you seem to think he does. She may live for months after I am dead."

"But before you die you ought to know that you have *lived*, Adele! Pietro says that he believes in this man—that he is not the creature we first thought him to be—and I can't bear to see you let this chance of happiness pass, for happiness seems to me so beautiful a thing! Promise me that if it is offered to you, you will take it!"

"He could not forget his obligation—even if I could!" Adele answered miserably.

"Obligation? Has he none to you if he loves you? Oh, Adele, don't think me mad, but I urge you because I realize more than any of the others that we are not people who can afford to delay our happiness! And I realize what a bitter thing it is to leave life without once having tasted its joys! Promise me that you will let him speak before he goes away!"

There was an instant's tense silence; then, before the girl could answer, Septimus had come out upon the piazza.

"I was looking for you, Miss le Noir," he said hurriedly, and his face bore evidence of some perturbation. "I have just had a long-distance telephone call from Mr. Scullin."

CHAPTER IX.

"Septimus! How you startled me!"

The servant drew back apologetically.

"Mr. Scullin has just called me on the telephone from the junction at Crossville, Miss le Noir, and he says that he will reach Talladougua on the twelve-twenty train."

The girl turned upon him a startled face, filled with dismay.

"Ambrose Scullin coming to-day!"

Miss Montrose had disappeared inside the house, and Septimus came a step closer, lowering his voice to what he considered the proper tone in discussing intricate household matters.

"But there is the room in Doctor van Zandt's suite, which can be arranged for him without much delay, Miss le Noir. I am sure that he will not object to the change for so short a while, especially if Mr. Holbrook leaves as soon as he now thinks."

The girl put her hand to her throat.

"Yes, yes!" she said quickly. "Do the best you can for Mr. Scullin's comfort!"

"I shall be very sure to do that, ma'am, for he told me that he has been quite ill down in Florida."

"Ill?"

"He has had an attack of malarial fever which has not left him yet; but he decided to come on up this far, anyway, for he considered that his delay in Florida only made it worse."

"I'm sorry he is ill," she said absently.

"And I hardly know what to do about sending to the station for him," Septimus kept on. "Our big car is out of commission just now, and the roadster has no top. It would be dangerous for Mr. Scullin to make that trip at midday in an open car."

"Oh, dear—of course!" the girl exclaimed, with a worried look. "But didn't Mr. Holbrook think of sending Henry in his car to Talladougua to-day to get some information about the trains? Perhaps he will go in time to bring Mr. Scullin back."

"But Henry gave his wrist a little

sprain a few minutes ago when he was putting the new tires on his car, and Doctor Cunningham, who was passing the garage, looked at it and warned him not to try to use his hand to-day. Mr. Holbrook said that he would go himself to Talladoga, I believe."

"Then run quickly and ask him to wait over until the twelve-twenty train gets in," the girl exclaimed. "That will not delay him much, and we'll wait luncheon for him. I'm sure he will not mind waiting there such a little while."

"I don't believe that he will have very long to wait," the negro answered, slipping his watch out. "It is half past eleven now."

"Then you'd best go down to the garage and ask him to hurry," she suggested. Whereupon the servant disappeared at once, and a few minutes later Adele saw the big gray car slipping slowly down the driveway toward the grove of oaks.

The mountain road was rough, the great ruts that had been carved out by the wagon wheels after the last heavy rain being baked to the hardness of bricks. Holbrook took these bad places slowly, for the habit of caution was strong within him, on account of the frail little spiritlike creature who was always with him on motor trips, and who must be protected from jolts and jars of every description. But when the main pike was reached, he was conscious of a sensation of speed fever, for the road before him lay sloping down the mountainside, temptingly smooth. He enjoyed the long coast, the pebbly claybanks on either side of the road flying past him like a length of orange ribbon. Presently the town came in view, dusty, weed grown, and unspeakably ugly. He put on such speed as was allowable, and reached the railway station without delay.

It still lacked a quarter of an hour until train time, but the little building already showed signs of activity. There was no one in the main waiting room, and the busy click of the telegraph instrument from behind the half-raised ticket window reverberated with a hol-

low sound of desolation. A negro porter outside lay stretched full length across an iron truck, whose bars gleamed brightly in the sunlight.

Holbrook hurried across the room. His footsteps sounded loud and hollow upon the bare plank floor, but the man bending over the desk inside the ticket office did not turn around or even glance up until he was addressed. He had heard the chugging of the automobile outside, and this stolid indifference is the Southern mountaineer's way of showing independence to the man in the "b'iled shirt."

"I should like to find out what connection I can make at Chattanooga with the train from Washington—"

The man at the desk motioned him inside the office.

"It's nearly train time," he volunteered slowly, "and the window will be blocked up, with some guy wantin' to buy a ticket, maybe."

He unlocked the door, and Holbrook stepped inside. For the next quarter of an hour his wits wrestled with the wits of the mountaineer ticket agent, and so absorbed was he in his fruitless search after information that he scarcely observed the train that had pulled up outside until he glanced through the window, and saw that the coaches were discharging a rather surprising number of passengers—a motley crew enough.

"There'll be no mistaking the man I'm looking for," he thought, as he viewed the dingy throng and tried to imagine some of the discomforts of riding in such a train. "He'll be likely to wait until this gang has all cleared out before he attempts his own exit."

With this conclusion in his mind, he had started across the platform when his attention was attracted by a voice behind him, evidently speaking to the station master. Holbrook had given a start of surprise at the mere sound of a well-bred voice coming from the midst of the throng behind him; then, an instant later, as the deeper inflexions of the tones fell upon his ears, he stopped abruptly, and listened.

"There's a crowd aboard to-day, and

I swung on the doorknob all the way over so as to be able to get out first," the voice was saying, and something in the quality of the timbre, the familiar intonation—mellow and a little lazy, like his own—caused a sudden stiffening of Holbrooks' muscles, as if he were petrified to the spot. "I was looking for Septimus—the colored man from Pausilypon—but I don't see him anywhere."

"Septimus hasn't been here to-day, sir!" It was the sleepy negro, stretched across the gleaming truck, who replied.

"Not here? Then do you know if he has sent any one with a conveyance for Mr. Ambrose Scullin?"

Holbrook moved mechanically across the platform. His face was turned toward his own car, and he did not once glance back toward the man whose voice now supplied the missing link in the chain of memories which the fantastic name, "Ambrose Scullin," had first conjured up. He did not need to look back and see the face, nor did he wish the other man to see him in the midst of that gaping throng. As he reached the shadow of the car, his eyes had the unseeing look that somnambulists wear, and a little negro boy who had approached the splendid machine with an eager curiosity started back in affright as he glanced up and saw the livid face of the man approaching.

Holbrook saw the pickaninny, and a sudden thought came to him. He motioned, and, after a moment's scared hesitation, the little black boy came up to him.

"Here!" A shining coin dropped at the raganuffin's feet, raising a small cloud of dust. "Go quickly and tell the gentleman on the platform that this is the car he wants."

The boy darted off. The delay seemed long to Holbrook, but he did not once turn his face in the direction of the crowd from whose midst was to emerge the man he was expecting. His hand was tightly gripping the curve of the steering wheel, his knuckles whitened with the strength of the grasp. His face was still deadly pale, but his eyes had lost their unseeing look, for

before his mind was flashing now a panorama so vivid that it seemed again passing before his actual vision.

"Ambrose Scullin!" he muttered.

Now that the name had been connected at last with so vital a thing as a voice, and that voice the most familiar one to him in all his life, he smiled in self-derision that he had been so slow in remembering. There was at this instant a clear-cut picture in his memory—he saw it again as if it had been but yesterday that its impression had been made upon his boyish recollection—a long, hilly street in Edinburgh, a grass-plot surrounded by an iron fence, a shaft of rough stone with bronze tablets upon each of its four sides. He, himself, was standing before the shaft, devouring, with youthful gusto, the record of valor it bore. There were two others with him—an older man who shivered a little at the blustering wind that swept down over the city from the wild heights of Arthur's Seat, and, close by his side, a boy—the other boy!

"Let's read over the names on the monument, and see which sounds the bravest," one of the youngsters had suggested, and the father, lenient in everything, had smiled a little at their folly, and drawn his overcoat more closely about him.

"Among those who were slain in the first attack, and whose names are enshrined in the hearts of all loyal Scotchmen, were: Edgar Clopton, Lewis Campbell, Andrew McDougal, Richard Cowan, Ambrose Scullin—"

"There—that's a good name—'Ambrose Scullin,'" the other boy had interrupted eagerly. "It *sounds* brave! I'll take that for my name when we go back home and organize a Highland company!"

Holbrook remembered it so well! Together they had copied in their grimy little notebooks the names of Scotia's felled braves, and the following summer a band of American boys in a tiny Louisiana town had proudly borne those names, marching to the music of bagpipes—glorying in their plaids—half ashamed of their kilts—

The delay seemed long, for there was

luggage to be looked after at the station, but presently there were footsteps approaching through the soft, dusty sand, and that same voice was close behind him, saying something in a puzzled tone:

"This pickaninny, here, tells me that your car has been sent——"

Holbrook turned slowly on his heel. The other man was quite alone, as Holbrook had intended he should be when this meeting took place. They faced each other, and for a long moment neither spoke. Then the man who called himself Ambrose Scullin dropped his traveling bag quickly to the roadside, his hand outstretched.

"Douglas! My God!"

Holbrook caught the hand in his. He was still dazed, and his words were incoherent.

"I didn't know it was *you*! They told me all the time that Ambrose Scullin was coming, but—I couldn't remember where I had heard that name!"

At these words a look of sudden horror passed over the younger man's face.

"*They* told you! My God! You're not at Pausilypon!"

Holbrook shook his head.

"Not in the way you mean—no! But we have been staying there for the past two weeks. Miss Jane was stricken again with paralysis while we were traveling through these mountains, and—that was the nearest house."

The other man had listened absently after that first word of denial, and, as Holbrook ceased speaking, he came close to him, placing his hand, rather uncertainly, upon the other's arm.

"Douglas, it is good to see you again!"

Holbrook's lips twitched, for he had caught the sound of heart hunger in the voice whose every tone he knew. He made a quick motion toward the car.

"Get in, boy; you look sick!"

The young fellow looked at him wonderingly.

"Do you mean that you're——"

He could not put the question, but in the tone of his voice there echoed an

ancient longing, a homesickness—a grief that was filled with shame.

"I mean, Philip, that you've eluded me as long as you are going to! I'm going to take you on to Pausilypon now—for you ought to be in bed—then when we leave there—we will go home."

"Home?"

"Miss Jane and I have a home in Boston! Of course, you'll go there with us!"

The other man's eyes were filled with wonder. He lifted one hand wearily to his head as if he could not understand.

"I didn't think that you would ever want to see me again!" he said, with a touch of simple, boyish misery in his tones. "I wanted to get away—out of your sight—before I could see that you hated me!"

"Rash nonsense, Philip!" Holbrook ejaculated sharply, for his brother was near to a nervous breakdown. "It was a piece of folly that has caused me more unhappiness than all the other troubles combined! Why should I hate you? What an extremist you are—we all are, for that matter—but I believe you are the worst! However, since I have found you again, this folly will be at an end! As soon as Ambrose Scullin can disappear from the world, Philip Holbrook will shave off his beard and—come home!"

At these words, the young fellow looked at Holbrook a moment searchingly, to see if he caught the import aright. He saw that the square-cut, rather stern jaw had relaxed into a line of gentleness, and that, moreover, there was an eager welcome shining from the blue eyes.

"I don't deserve kindness!" he muttered half savagely, but his heart was beating with a wild sense of relief and joy.

Holbrook gave orders to the negro who came up at that moment with an armful of hand luggage marked "A. S.," and the bags were stowed away in the tonneau. The other man had climbed into the front seat of the car, and now sat there huddled against the

corner, his shoulders drooping as if in great weariness.

As Holbrook started the machine and they plowed their way slowly through the sandy drive beside the railroad track, he seemed to arouse himself with an effort from the languor that had followed the excitement of a few minutes before; but he still had the appearance of a man physically ill, and it was not until the pebbly banks of the high mountain roadsides were flashing past again, like orange ribbons, that he nerved himself to speak.

CHAPTER X.

"You got the—the letters I sent you from time to time?" he asked, starting up abruptly, as if some thought had awakened him from a half doze.

Holbrook smiled sadly.

"Yes—if you can call them letters."

"They were all I dared to write," the other man returned, with a sigh of great fatigue. "I could not break away from you entirely and let you think that I was dead! Still—I could not bring myself to believe that you would care to know anything more than just that—that I was living and getting on all right."

The car was going slowly up a bit of steep grade, and Holbrook fumbled in his breast pocket a moment, bringing out a worn envelope.

"This is the last one. It was forwarded to me at Pass Christian, months ago. I have kept it, for we have been traveling around in such out-of-the-way places since then that mail is forwarded to me only at long intervals. I didn't know when I should ever have another."

Philip Holbrook took the envelope mechanically and slipped out the one sheet of paper it contained. There was a single line written on it—a word as to his welfare, and his name—nothing more. For the past six years no fuller message than this had ever come. There had never been an address save New York. No possible chance had ever been given for Holbrook to answer.

"I had to let you know that I lived,"

the young fellow repeated dully. "You were bound to know that, as I lived, I regretted."

"And you should have known equally as well, that as I lived, I missed you!"

Again there was a dull, half-believing stare from the other man.

"Is it possible, Douglas, that these years of torture have not caused you to hate me?"

Holbrook gave the wheel between his hands a savage twist, sending the giant car to one side of the road with a lurch.

"It's the supersensitive side of your nature that makes you imagine such nonsense, Philip," he answered, after a little pause when his lips involuntarily tightened. "As I have just said, you are an extremist, and always were! You could do some wild, unnatural deed of self-sacrifice to show me that you regretted, but the thing that you should have done never once entered your mind!"

"What are you driving at? Don't talk in riddles, Douglas," the other begged. "My head hurts confoundedly."

"Did it never occur to you that you might stay by and help relieve this isolation I've endured these past five years?"

"Isolation?"

"Of course! Society has welcomed me about as it would welcome any ordinary leper! Not a *moral* leper, mind you—good God, no! I have seen black-souled scoundrels a-plenty purring in the sunshine of smiles that would turn to sneers at the mere sight of *me*! It's physical repulsion—this sight of a young man married to a woman old enough to be his grandmother! They sicken even as they despise me. I am a spit-upon man!"

There was a low moan of pain from the other man. His forehead had broken out in beads of perspiration, and his eyes had begun to glitter as if with the onset of a fever.

"Why do you tell me this—why do you rub it in?" he burst out, with a sort of childish fretfulness. "Don't you know that I would give my right arm, or every drop of blood I have, to

wipe out the very memory of this? I did what I believed to be right! I kept myself out of your sight!"

"A shortsighted view of expiation!" Holbrook returned bitterly. "My God, Philip, I've been an exile! I've suffered every torture from loneliness that a human being could endure! I've needed you as I never needed you before in my life!"

The young fellow heaved again his sigh of terrible physical weariness.

"And father grieved for me, too! I was miserable, but I could not go back."

"But father's grief was short-lived," Holbrook returned grimly. "He had already had his deathblow when I came in that day and told him that I had married Miss Jane Edgecomb! I believe at times he rather gloried in the fact that you had gone away."

Philip's eyes were misty.

"Do you mean that he blamed you for that, too?"

"Yes, of course! He thought that you had left home because you could not stand the shame of my marriage. You were young, and could get away. He was old, and had to face it. You know the family pride!"

Philip Holbrook straightened up in his seat, thoroughly aroused now from his lethargy of wretchedness.

"But it wasn't fair that you should have shouldered that, too, Douglas! You needn't have added to my debt unnecessarily. You should have let him know my share in the miserable business."

"And killed him in his very tracks? No! An old man often has his Benjamin, Philip, but when that Benjamin chances to be far from home he becomes a very god to worship! Father always loved you better than he loved me, even as every friend we ever had could not help responding to the fascination of your nature more readily than to the steady friendliness I might be able to offer. No—I could not drag the veil from father's eyes at the last! I hadn't any desire to, for I never felt that the slightest actual blame could be attached to you—no matter what the world might say. What father felt was

not harder to bear than many other things at that time. So he died—still wondering and ashamed."

"And what did he think of Miss Jane?" the other man asked in a low tone. "Did he misjudge her, as well?"

Holbrook shook his head.

"He did not misjudge her. He knew her motive too well for that. I think that he was very bitter toward her that she should have allowed this dread and timidity of hers to go so far, but she had talked to him for years of her desire to have a protector in her latter days. She had wanted to adopt some needy young person, but he had always counseled her against this, foreseeing that disappointment would likely come of it. Poor little lady! She never had time to realize fully what any one thought of her, for before we had been married many months the stroke of paralysis came on, and she was ill for a long while. When she recovered her general health somewhat, we saw that her mind was forever clouded. She remembers that I am in some way connected with her establishment, and that she can count on me as a protector, but her thoughts and even her words are confused. She has never spoken of me since her illness except as her nephew."

"Still with the notion of Uncle Tom in her head," the other man said softly.

"Of course! Poor little loyal soul! They had had a misunderstanding just on the eve of Shiloh, and he had ridden off to the battlefield without coming back to ask her forgiveness. This has always caused a certain shyness in her manner whenever she speaks of him—as if there were something not quite seemly in her remaining true to an unrepentant lover; but she told me once that she had drawn a deal of comfort from her dreams of him—for he always comes to her then begging for forgiveness."

Philip smiled.

"Poor Miss Jane!"

"I have always felt that there was a sentimental notion mixed in with her ideas of self-protection when she suggested to me that she would like to marry one of us so that the last years

of her life—as well as her fortune—would be in safe hands,” Douglas Holbrook kept on. “She had evidently been thinking a great deal of Uncle Tom on the morning she sent for me to draw up her will. She was shy, and she was worried. There was a good-sized fortune to be disposed of—there was old age confronting her, but I believe at bottom there was a vague, unspoken desire in her heart to have the name ‘Holbrook’ on her tombstone!”

“And she didn’t care particularly which one of us furnished the name?”

“At first it seemed that she didn’t, for she discussed the two of us in a way as matter-of-fact as if it were a question of buying a becoming bonnet! My mind was in a tumult on your account, for it was only the night before that you——”

“Yes, yes! I remember!” Philip interrupted hastily.

“And as I saw her point I instantly seized the idea as a godsend! There was money—ready and abundant money! My only fear at the time was that she would change her mind before the matter could be consummated. There was never a gold digger who felt the zest that I felt at that moment. Not another idea was in my mind! Just to get the money—as quickly as I could!

“‘Which one of us would you rather marry, Miss Jane?’ I asked, trying to conceal the eagerness in my voice. She debated the matter for several minutes. ‘Well, Douglas, you are the older, and you are like your Uncle Tom, although Philip reminds me of him much more forcibly because he has his voice so exactly, and that would be a great pleasure to me, of course. However, I don’t think that I should allow a sentimental motive to govern me unduly, and while Philip is a dear boy, he is, perhaps, a trifle less steady than you, and he might find the burden of caring for an old woman more than he bargained for. So if you are sure—very sure, Douglas—that you are unattached——’ Philip, my head was whirling so that I didn’t take time to consider the matter save from that one standpoint!”

“You didn’t take time to let father or me know, or we shouldn’t have permitted it! I’d have insisted on Miss Jane taking me, instead,” Philip declared strongly.

“And thus let her get the idea into her head that we were fortune hunters? No! There wasn’t time for dallying, nor for any discussion one way or another. *She* had broached the matter to me, so she could not consider me disgustingly mercenary, and, as we both understood our part of the contract, there was no need for delay. We were married that same morning.”

After a slight pause which was filled with silent memories, Holbrook continued:

“It was an ordeal, of course, although I’m glad to say that I had not at the time, nor have I ever had, the repugnance they say a man feels toward an unloved woman. I had not married a woman, but a spirit—a gentle little being whose only desire in the world was to benefit me in return for the protection I might be able to give her. Then I went home and told you and father! After that I remember the day as a man might recall a day when the sun was in eclipse, and the face of the earth was weird!

“Miss Jane, thoughtful and generous always, had placed, you remember, a large sum of money to my credit, driving down to the bank herself an hour after the ceremony. She never asked a question as to how I had used it. It was the strangest day imaginable, first the unbelievably queer marriage, then the gift of the money, which sent me to the heights of joyous relief, afterward that night—when I faced the thing that has always seemed to me the most cruel and unnecessary—your disappearance! The note you left that night convinced me that you would never come back!”

“I couldn’t stay, Douglas! Your face was like the face of a dead man!”

“Then it was on account of the struggle through which I had just passed. There was no horror of being—with her. She was always the kindest little creature alive, Philip.”

“I know—poor Miss Jane!”

"After *that* she saw I was most unhappy. She was so sorry over your going away, and she felt that she was in a manner to blame for it, when she realized that the town was agog, and that father would never again be anything to her or to me more than a graven image of a man. She suggested that we go away somewhere—anywhere! From that day began the ceaseless racing over land and sea which has occupied our time since, and has been, perhaps, the best thing, all around, that we could do."

"But the isolation you mention—wasn't it less while you were traveling?" Philip asked eagerly, as if he were seeking in the thought a crumb of comfort. Holbrook shook his head, turning his eyes away from the other man's anxious ones.

"Of course, people were inclined to be decent when we chanced to meet on journeys, especially after Miss Jane's illness when they heard her speak of me as her nephew. But a change in their manner was sure to make itself felt as soon as they learned the truth."

"Which you were always in a hurry to tell?"

"Of course! On short journeys by railroad there was seldom any occasion for explanations, but on shipboard it was always hideous! People learn each other so soon there. Miss Jane's pretty, old-fashioned way of dressing always attracted notice from kindly disposed travelers who wished to be courteous to a picturesque relic of the past. They would stop on deck and talk to her, always finding out her name, and afterward scanning the passenger list to discover just who was with her. After that, no man would willingly drop into the vacant deck chair next mine for a chat; I never was invited into the smoking room for a game of poker—I never signed checks for any drinks save my own."

There was a tense silence for a little while, then Holbrook's voice went on monotonously:

"Once, when we had taken a villa at Monte Carlo for the winter, and were on our way to it, lazily zigzagging

across the Mediterranean on one of the big transatlantic pleasure ships, a woman became interested in us, it seemed; and even after she found out the relationship, she was pleased always to be kind. She, too, was lonely, and she spent hours with Miss Jane on deck or in the lounge. She talked a great deal with me, as well. No other woman had given me a friendly word since my marriage, and it goes without saying that I was pleased—not to say touched. She was not a beautiful young woman whose contact could be harmful to a man in my position, but she was intelligent and gracious. I could have kissed the hem of her garment!

"We had traveled a great distance that year, and Miss Jane was tired of wandering. She had hailed the idea of this villa with a homesick longing, and she talked a good deal about what a haven she expected it to be. That villa, for the time, became the spot of her restless longing. The woman we had met on shipboard kept up her interest in us as long as we were together. She had written three or four novels, it seemed—of the cheap, 'best-selling' variety, I gathered from what she had told me—but still I looked forward to seeing something with her name to it. It was a year before I was in an American bookstore again. The name I sought was there, all right, blazoned in gilt, over red cloth boards! There was, indeed, a new novel by our friend—a best seller, and it was entitled 'A Villa and A Villain!'

"I bought the thing and read it. For the first time I saw myself as others saw me! I was a cad, and the luxury symbolized in the villa was the price of my manhood. Whole chapters were devoted to the delineation of my hypocrisy. The woman who wrote the book had known all the intimate side of our married life, yet the quality in me which she designated as courtesy, and which was nothing more than the common politeness that I had always shown Miss Jane, was used as a sensational foil to black-browed detectives, employed by the lawful heirs to shadow the scoundrel who had supplanted

them! It was a psychological study, portraying the habitual deceit that may grow into one's very moral fiber!"

"Good Lord, Douglas, don't tell me any more!" the other man begged. A look of stony hardness had come over his face as his brother had related this incident. Holbrook smiled.

"There is very little more to tell—of that nature. We have traveled no more on ships, and as little on trains as could be managed. We have toured over many parts of this country, but always in our own car—where there was no necessity for explanations. In fact, I believe I had not been subjected to the ordeal of an explanation for weeks until we came to Pausilypon, and——"

"But Pausilypon," Philip interrupted quickly, "are you made to feel uncomfortable there?"

"No-o! They are all most kind—Still, I am anxious to get away as soon as I can," Holbrook floundered, turning his eyes hastily away lest the other man read the truth there. "I had expected to leave just as soon as Ambrose Scullin came—Doctor van Zandt's man of affairs! Tell me, Philip!" quickly veering to this change of subject, "how did you manage to change your name and manner of life so completely? These people up here tell me that the old doctor couldn't get along without you!"

The young man smiled.

"It was the greatest stroke of luck that a fellow out of a job ever had! When I left home it occurred to me that it would be better to change my name and to make an entirely fresh start, although, of course, there was no actual necessity for such a thing. I went to New York and hunted out the cheeriest-looking hotel on Broadway, for I was as desolate as ever a man could be; and it came to me, as I walked up to the clerk at the hotel, that I would register as Ambrose Scullin, for that name would be easier for me to associate with myself than any other.

"The first week I was there I began letting my beard grow—I saw no familiar faces, and was recognized by no one—then I set about finding work

to do. I had my living to make, and I was a stranger in New York. It's a pity Hercules did not have *that* to do for his thirteenth task, so that he could see that the other twelve were child's play! Which way was I to turn? Ambrose Scullin had no letters of introduction, but neither did he have ought to live down! I started out pretty cheerfully, but my cheer had worn itself out after a month of walking about through that wilderness of selfish greed! Good God! You have no conception of what it is like! I tried everything in reason—then I began trying everything out of reason!

"One day—you know the kind that comes sometimes when you spend all the forenoon planning whether it will be the river, a pistol shot, or a box of pellets, only to find in the afternoon that your lucky star is still on the job? Well, the morning had been a nightmare of disappointment, and early after lunch I took a trolley car and rode down to Battery Park. I don't know whether I had an ironical notion of finding myself a future home in that part, or whether I thought that the sight of real poverty would put new life into me; anyway, I went. I found a bench under a tree, with nobody near except a fat old gentleman holding a newspaper up before his face, busily reading.

"I sat down and took out a memorandum book I had in my pocket. There were no notes made in it, for there was nothing happening to me those days that I wished to jot down—I had no engagements to keep. Still, I had a notion that I should feel less like a piece of human driftwood if I had even the appearance of being interested in something; so I scanned the blank pages of my notebook while I rested, and presently I saw two young Italians sauntering across the grass toward me. They were looking for a cool spot for a nap, and they threw themselves down upon the ground not far from my bench, and in five minutes were sound asleep.

"They were ragged, miserable-looking creatures, and as I sat there and watched them for a while, I heard a lit-

tle chuckling laugh from the old man on the other end of the bench. I turned to him in surprise.

"Are you beginning to realize, young fellow, that you have something to be thankful for, after all?" he asked, with a good-natured, quizzical smile. Usually I am not given to taking up with a stranger's joke, especially when made at my expense, but something in the old man's manner caused me to answer with civility.

"They can sleep and I can't," I responded, and the old man saw that this was no jest.

"Have you been up to any rascality that you're sorry for?" he asked, and again I was impelled to make a decent reply.

"I didn't intend it for rascality," I answered; whereupon he gave a great laugh.

"Oh, they never do intend it for rascality, do they—the young dogs?" he said. "Well, let's you and I find a better-smelling place than this, and talk the matter over. I used to be a boy myself."

"We walked up the street and went into the first endurable place we could find to have a drink. Van Zandt called for a great mug of beer, burying his head between his shoulders as he drank it, with a true Dutchman's hunch. 'So you can't find a job, although you're strong in body and got good sense?' he asked. 'What are you fit for, anyhow?'"

"Anything that takes an honest mind, a level head, and an 'oily tongue,'" I told him, recalling the place I had occupied in Baton Rouge.

"You're Southern?"

"Yes."

"And proud of it?"

"Yes, by Jove!"

"The old cross-questioner laughed.

"You've got good money sense, have you? Can you remember whether your Florida place is costing you a thousand dollars a month to run, or bringing you in a thousand a month profit?"

"I think so."

"And whether it's your pineapple grove in Cuba that freezes up, and your

camp in the Adirondacks that gets a yellow-fever scare—or the other way round?"

"Yes, I could keep those things straight," I declared.

"Well, I know an old chump who can't! A great fool of a fellow, who has more to run him crazy than the old woman who lived in the shoe! How would you like to come with him and do part of his worrying for him?"

"That was how our business connection began. He is a whimsical old fellow enough, as you would imagine from that; but he is intensely practical, as well. He has a great fad for studying faces and drawing his own conclusions, and he told me that afternoon that he thought I looked honest. However, it was several months before he intrusted me with any actual responsibility. Then gradually, as he saw that I could hold down the job, he gave me over the entire management of his different estates.

"He makes the rounds only to see the condition of the patients, and if they are looking well and seeming to improve in the atmosphere he has prescribed for them, the good old fellow sometimes stays and holds a week's jubilee. He always comes most unexpectedly, and enjoys the surprise he gives his 'convicts,' as he calls them."

The grove of oaks surrounding the house had come in sight, and Philip Holbrook's voice died away abruptly. He was in a tremble of fear evidently, lest his manner should betray his excitement to the people at Pausilypon.

As they drove up before the steps, Douglas noticed that the young fellow jumped rather unsteadily from the car—and that there was the evidence of fever on his flushed face. He recalled that a fever with Philip was never a light matter, and already he fancied—uneasily—that there was the glitter of delirium in his eyes.

CHAPTER XI.

At night, in the ravine, the trees seemed miles high. The moonlight sifted down softly between their far-away branches, lighting up a white gown with a mystic radiance, or out-

lining a man's somber figure into a shadowy giant. Everything was weird in the ravine at night, and every object seemed veiled by the dim, silver light with a beauty greater than its own. The shadows were of a soft, cool black, and the infrequent splotches of brightness—where the turn of the tiny creek brought its tumbling waters squarely out from the shade of the overhanging trees, or where the bed of white shells glistened under the rock from which the spring tinkled eternally—were like great white diamonds, shining through a veil of greenish-gray mist.

So steep were the sides of the vale which descended finally into the ravine that the only loitering place possible, once the descent was begun, was on a smooth rock jutting from the hillside just above the grotto where the spring dripped unceasingly. Here was a spot to rest and catch a panting breath, full of relief that a haven had been gained in safety. Nature had made it into an attractive place to begin with, and it had been upholstered into a bower by the people who made the spring a shrine.

A long, deep settle of twisted hickory had been pulled up into the screened nook made by a low-hanging juniper tree, and a rug of woven grasses gave an air of restful comfort. There were cushions whose covers of gay silk and linen had been faded into soft pastel shades, like the tones of some ancient tapestries; and, above the whole, was a bit of iron framework, over which was flung an awning when the weather chanced to be wet. Fifteen feet below glistened the shells of the tiny grotto.

Before dinner that evening, Holbrook had gone through with the semblance of a brief business interview with Ambrose Scullin in the library. At the table every one had noticed the evidences of illness in Scullin, and Mrs. Colman had exacted from him a half promise to go straight to bed as soon as the meal was finished. Holbrook had been placed at the farther end of the table, and between him and Scullin no particular conversation had been necessary.

He left the table as soon as he could, strolling alone out upon the piazza, where he found a secluded corner, and lighted his cigar. Francis Wayne followed him for a few moments' chat, but left presently, declaring that a storm was coming up, and that he wanted to go upstairs to his southwest window to watch it.

Holbrook drew a chair up close to the stone balustrade, well out of the shaft of light shining from the broad front door, and sat smoking in solitude for a while. He was so absorbed with his wondering, excited thoughts that he was at first unconscious of a woman's figure, which stood hesitatingly in the doorway for a few moments before opening the screen and coming out. She walked to the edge of the piazza, looking up with a speculating glance at the sky.

There was a brilliant moonlight at the time, but an ominous roar from the southwest and a certain heaviness of the sultry air promised one of those quick-coming electrical storms that punctuate the hot spells with little periods of delicious coolness.

Holbrook, looking up and seeing the girl standing there, rose to his feet.

"Will you not sit down?" he asked, and his voice was strained and abrupt.

She turned to him slowly.

"Thank you, but I left a book down at the spring this afternoon, a precious handmade thing belonging to Matzoth. I believe it's going to rain."

Holbrook knocked the ash from his cigar carelessly down into the thicket of vines below.

"I'll go and get it for you," he volunteered.

She hesitated, with the first touch of anything like wavering that he had ever observed in her.

"The ravine is always lovely at night! I believe I'll go with you."

"The ground is wet with dew—your skirts will get damp," he said, although his pulses were throbbing madly.

She glanced down, as if still debating.

"It doesn't matter if I ruin my clothes," she answered, with a queer lit-

tle catch in her voice. "I shall not be likely to need them another season!"

"Don't talk that way—not to-night of all times—for God's sake!" he begged, in a low, hoarse voice, as he came close to her and she slipped her arm within his.

She was silent, although the man could feel the trembling of her hand against his arm as they made their way cautiously down the slope.

The shadows were heavy as they reached the flat rock, and Adele crossed to the hickory bench, groping about for the book; the moonlight shone down so dimly through the trees that Holbrook followed her, striking a match to aid in the search. The flame flickered across the girl's face, giving her cheeks a warm glow and her eyes a starlight brightness. Their glances met, unexpectedly, as the book was found and the match was dying out.

"Shall—we sit down here a while?" she asked, speaking with a palpable effort.

Something in her manner, the unusual wavering, the shyness and new note of bitter despair that he had heard in her voice as she had made the half-mocking little speech about not needing her clothes another season, gave him a sense of foreboding. He knew that this was, in all probability, the last quiet hour that they would have together before he left Pausilypon, and it came to him, with a mad tumult of longing and despair, that the girl was suddenly feeling what he felt. The in-born chivalry in him made him sorry for her pain, even as the fever of desire in him gloated over the promise that her face and voice could no longer conceal.

"We should not stay here——"

She gave an impatient gesture.

"We can tell when the clouds get close!" she exclaimed quickly, but, as she turned and made a step toward the bench, the man was at her side. The quivering of her impatient words had died in her throat, overtaken and held by a rising sob. Holbrook's straining ears had caught the sound. It seemed to him as if all the blood in his body

had rushed, in a maddening flood, to his heart.

"I am not afraid of the storm," he whispered, leaning toward her, and dropping his cigar down upon the sloping bank, where it bounded away and fell into the creek below, with a little sizzling sound. "It is for your sake, Adele, that I am afraid! I love you! I didn't intend to tell you, but I—I lost my head! You will not condemn me——"

"Condemn you!"

There was the pathos of great yearning in the whisper. It was low with the plaint of passion.

"Adele!"

He was baffled by the darkness about them, but he knew the quick breath of desire. He caught her wrists. The muscles were drawn and quivering.

"I love you," he said again. "I love you!"

"Yes—yes!"

It was barely a whisper, but it went home to his heart, resting there and warming its altars, which had never known another woman's fires.

As for her—she had forgotten everything. If this man was a scoundrel, marrying a rich old woman for the sake of her money, the hideous thought had passed away from his mind. If he lived the life of a hypocrite—a luxury-loving parasite—a pensioner on his good looks and chivalry—she did not care. He had said that he loved her! Nothing else counted for a moment against that.

She rested her arms in his grasp. Her body relaxed its tension. Her soul was floating through a great space which was irradiated with all the sunrise colors. He felt the giving way.

"You have been cold to me!" he whispered, with a tinge of jealous reproach. "You have been cold to me! Why were you?"

His words brought her back to earth. They were the lover's complaints—the reproach he felt that his joy had been delayed, but they drew a quick curtain of reality before the fairy visions in her heart.

"We were separated! The little time

left me can bring no happiness! Why did you marry her?"

Holbrook was silent.

"Why did you marry her?" she demanded again, her voice heavy with sorrow.

The man stirred uneasily.

"Adele, there are some things that I may not tell even you!"

The words were a cry for mercy, but the girl was caught in the thrall of her own anguish.

"You may not tell me because of the shame that they entail!"

The man, wounded, but defenseless, recoiled from the sting of her words.

"Love, you don't know what you are saying!" he begged.

"I love you," she kept on, as if she had not heard. "I love the man you are now—all the time loathing the weak thing that you must have been when you married her!"

"Adele! Before God, I didn't know that——"

She laughed harshly.

"A man never does know how he will hurt some woman in years to come—does he? He takes his pleasure—he grasps his desire—he sows to the wind! A man may sow alone, but there is always a woman to help him reap!"

"I reap bitterness, love! You do not suffer alone!"

She placed her hand upon his shoulder, holding him off at arm's length.

"Douglas, have you thought that your own life may be long? You love me now, but in after years you may look back upon this as an—incident."

He made a passionate gesture of denial, but she still held him away from her, her hand pressed tightly against his shoulder.

"A man forgets; a woman, too, grows cold, and learns to love another, but—not a woman who has a year to live! I shall not forget you! I shall live my time out—without you—and I shall die, still longing for your touch, and never feeling it—still thirsting for the sound of your voice, and never hearing it! Oh, love, love—I want you!"

"Adele! Don't torture me!"

"But I want you to feel my pain! I

want you to know what you have done to me!"

"Love, hush! We suffer alike! Tomorrow I leave you! That thought alone crushes out all else! What am I going away to—a life of joy? I am going out again into the face of the world—for the world to spit at!"

"Yet I shall be here adoring you!"

"I wish I could stay here—only going away when you go. Death would not be death—a going away with you!"

"We should live a long while here together, Douglas! I could not die so soon if you were here."

"Sweetheart!"

His arms were close about her. Her words of passionate sorrow were stopped with kisses. The burning sweetness of each caress reminded them of how brief their joy could be. It was a moment of gold, snatched from a leaden eternity.

She lay quite still in his arms, grief-spent and languid from the force of her passion. There was no sound except the rumbling of the close-sweeping storm, and, near at hand, the tinkling of the spring water, dripping down to the shells beneath.

"Adele—dear heart!"

He buried his face in her hair. He drank in its fragrance. He crushed her in his arms, kissing her lips and eyes. His mouth sought the tip of her ear, his breath sending a maddening storm of sound to her brain. He drew her head down close to his heart, and she heard the heavy pounding. At its sound something in her soul—an endurance, a resisting power—seemed to give way.

"Douglas—we cannot separate!"

She breathed the words softly, insidiously, and stirred him to the knowledge that the same thought was struggling for recognition in his own heart. Their love was all-absorbing; the claim the other woman had upon him seemed a paltry piece of child's play beside this thing. Yet even in that mad moment, a vestige of Holbrook's chivalry whispered in his ear.

"Lie still in my arms, love, and let me think," he begged her.

"But your marriage is nothing!"

"Hush—hush, Adele! You don't know what you are saying! Let me try to think."

He held her again in his arms. She was hushed to sudden silence by the knowledge of the struggle that she knew he was enduring—a mighty struggle of primal right and wrong.

The storm came closer. The air was stifling with the low-lying pall of torpid heat. Holbrook sat rigid, thinking, planning, wondering—facing failure at every turn. The ears of the girl caught his labored breath.

Suddenly, in the midst of this tenseness, she became aware that there had been a cessation of one of the sounds that had come to them with penetrating sharpness. The thunder was rolling heavily, but between its intervals there had been deep silence, save for the dripping of the spring beneath them. It was this sound—scarcely more than the tinkle of a fairy bell, but keeping up its gentle monotony every moment of the day and night—that had abruptly left off.

The girl in Holbrook's arms caught the change in the broken silence and stirred uneasily.

"There must be some one at the spring," she said, starting up and speaking in a frightened whisper. "Listen! It has stopped running."

The man tightened his hold, trying to draw her down again to her place in his arms. So far away were his thoughts that he had not observed the cessation of the water's sound. Even as she spoke, filled with startled wonder and fear, he had scarcely heeded.

"Come back, sweetheart! Come back!"

He spoke aloud, absently, and her dread of being overheard caused her to tremble with half-fearful suspense.

"If any one should have heard us talking——"

He roused himself from the train of thoughts that had settled over him like a stupor.

"It's nothing," he declared, endeavoring to catch her hand and draw her

back to her place beside him. "A snake, perhaps, has crawled under the drip."

He felt her body quiver with a nervous shudder.

"A snake!"

"Probably nothing more than that—surely nobody on a night like this. Shall I go and see?"

"Oh, no! Please don't! It may be one of the servants, or some one——"

"It is a snake," he insisted, "coming out for a drink of water. We are quite safe up here!"

But she turned away, holding out her hand gropingly toward the broad path to the house.

"We must go," she said wearily. "We must go back and face things as they really are; but oh, Douglas——"

She turned to him for one more moment of joy. He caught her face again in a long kiss. Then she stood aside as he passed in front of her to the steep path that wound above them. Gaining a foothold, he held out his hand to her and, still trembling with the strange, foreboding nervousness that had seized her, she felt about in the darkness for the hand extended to her, holding out both her own as she reached up to him.

CHAPTER XII.

"Who the thunder are you?"

A rickety "surrey," evidently the *pièce de résistance* of the Talladougua livery stable, had drawn up before the tall gates of Pausilypon early the next morning, just as Douglas Holbrook came out upon the piazza for his after-breakfast cigar.

A queer old man—who would have been Doctor Samuel Johnson undoubtedly, if he had walked the streets century before last, dressed in snuff-colored clothes with metal buttons—came puffing up the walk to the House of Joy.

Holbrook eyed him with the same surprise that he himself had called forth when he had made his own unexpected appearance at the house more than two weeks before, for during this time no other strange face had appeared

among the odd little band who lived there.

The stranger lumbered up the steps without making any inquiry save the one above recorded, and without waiting for an answer to that. He was ponderous and awkward, moving slowly, and emitting sounds of struggle, like a giant stone crusher moving up grade. He had an immense, hanging chin, and his long hair fell in crisp white rings about his ears and great, thick neck.

Holbrook saw these details only after the man had offered his unusual greeting. As they had looked at each other in surprise for the first moment or two, before either had spoken, Holbrook had had time to notice nothing very particularly about the old man's dress or general appearance, for his attention had been held by the almost preternatural twinkle in the half-hidden eyes. It was not unlike a Santa Claus twinkle, promising a pocketful of surprises for chance youngsters, and always a joke for a passing grown-up; yet there was a vague suggestion of mysterious goings-on back of that twinkle, as well as the fun, and one could imagine that this kindly looking old man would never put all the sweetmeats he had in one pocket, to be found at the first dive of eager fingers. There was a suggestion of something kept back—a surprise that was in store all the time, but that was to be sprung only when it would be most enjoyed.

The newcomer walked, still unbidden, across the veranda, and eased himself down into the depths of a great hickory chair. He ran a fat forefinger inside the edge of his melting collar, and seized the monogrammed corner of a folded handkerchief, shaking it out and crushing its linen folds against the dampness of his forehead. This done, he turned to Holbrook and spoke again, with a greater show of interest now, but in a slightly lowered tone.

"Honest Injun, who the thunder *are* you?"

Holbrook smiled, knocking the ash from his cigar:

"I am an outsider, doctor."

The old man made a gesture betraying impatience.

"Don't you suppose I know that! Of course you don't belong here! But that doesn't tell me who you are."

Before Holbrook could launch forth into any sort of explanation, the old gentleman seemed to have forgotten his query, for he had put another one, pointing with a pudgy hand to his own great chest:

"You called me doctor. Doctor who?"

Before this time Holbrook had guessed the identity of the strange visitor, but as he remembered all he had heard of the old fellow's great love of a joke, he forbore giving the name that had now come to him, mentioning, instead, his first comical thought:

"Doctor Samuel Johnson, reincarnated—who else?"

The great old fellow laughed softly, his mirth seeming to run over him in little billows of adipose tissue.

"Well, you're not a doctor yourself, eh?"

Holbrook shook his head.

"I thought not, or, if you are, you're not a very good one to make a diagnosis by guesswork. I make quick diagnoses always myself, but there is method in my way—method."

He seemed to fall into a moment's reverie after this whimsical statement, and Holbrook said nothing, smoking and watching the stranger in silence. The old man finally looked up, and, seeing the young fellow's glance fixed upon him with a sort of wondering amusement, made an effort toward rising to his feet; giving up the idea, however, as soon as he discovered what a task it was to remove his bulk from the recesses of the sleepy-hollow chair.

"Well, why don't you give me some news of the more important members of the household?" he demanded suddenly, "instead of keeping me here gossiping about nothing? What are they all doing? Say, why is nobody stirring at this hour of the morning? Aren't they up?"

Holbrook removed his cigar from his lips.

"Oh, yes; they're up."

The old fellow looked ferociously into the dimness of the silent hall.

"Then what are they all about? Are they praying for the repose of their souls?" he asked.

"Mr. Farrel, the master of the house, has gone out on a fishing trip to spend the day, and——"

"Fishing?"

"Yes; that's the way he spends his time now."

The stranger gave a grunt of amazement.

"That old money grabber! Fishing? What would Wall Street say? Where's the man's ambition gone to?"

"He has changed his ambition somewhat since he joined the Children of the Sun. He says that if he had ten years more to live he would spend them all scouring Europe for old editions of 'The Compleat Angler.'"

A smile zigzagged across the old man's face, settling at the corner of his mouth.

"Good Lord!" he exclaimed, with a little whistling sound of amazement. "What *would* Wall Street say? A corner on old editions!"

"As a matter of fact, he doesn't know an old edition from a 'best seller,'" Holbrook hastened to explain, for he realized by the questions that the old man put to him, as well as by the amazement that greeted his replies, that the details of the daily life at Pausilypon had not been made known to him in his far-off New York office. "It is simply the passion for fishing that has taken possession of him."

"And when he came down here, he didn't have sense enough to spit on the hook for good luck before he baited it!"

Holbrook smiled involuntarily, for his own eyes had remained grave throughout the course of the conversation, despite the infectious twinkle in the half-hidden ones opposite him.

"He has good luck now nearly every time he goes out," he volunteered quietly. "The luck is better when Matzoth goes with him—Francis Wayne, I mean."

"The parson boy? How's that?"

"Mr. Farrel has to swear under his breath, out of respect to the way Matzoth's collar is fastened, you understand. He declares that the fish bite better with low-toned profanity."

"Oh, by Jove, I should think so!"

"But Matzoth doesn't go very often, because Dede, Mrs. Colman, talks so much, that she is seldom included in the invitation."

"And the parson feels called upon to stay here at home and read the fourteenth chapter of John to her, eh? She was an actress, you know, and the Wayne boy was always deathly afraid of anything worldly. I think the 'world' was the only conception of hell he ever had, for he's too near the angels in his nature to be able to conjure up a first-class hell."

"Then he's wiped even his mild hell off the map now," Holbrook returned, looking out through an opening in the vines half musingly. "And he's put the world on. A very beautiful world has been created for him here, and he has felt the goodness of it."

The old man seemed strangely interested by this word of commendation. His voice dropped again, as he leaned forward slightly, and his face was very earnest.

"Tell me," he said abruptly, "from the standpoint of an outsider, how does this strange little world strike you? A pretty good sort of place to be, eh?"

Holbrook flushed a little, and hesitated before he answered, but when he did, the old man seemed to sense that in the young fellow's brief "Yes" there was a far-reaching depth of feeling.

"A place capable of being a haven to those who come here—yes?"

"A haven—surely! More nearly a heaven," the younger man responded, still with lowered voice, and speaking slowly, as if scarcely aware of a listener's presence. This queer old plain-speaking chap had a way of drawing expressions even from people who were little wont to unburden themselves. "It has been nothing short of that to me."

"And the world outside had not been heavenly, eh?"

"Hellish," Holbrook replied quietly. The doctor smiled.

"Ah, I thought so! One part of my job is to read the story a fellow carries around in his face, you know."

"Yes—I've heard so."

"And I should like to read yours further some time soon. You have a particularly bulldoggish jaw, but—I say! What have we here?"

A shabby little runabout carrying a seedy-looking young man and a tattered little ducky was coming around the curve in the road that led past the house. At the driveway up to the steps, it turned in; finally drawing up and halting beside the hydrangea bed, the dying groans of its machinery out of all proportion to its size.

"That is Doctor Cunningham, of Tal-ladoug," Holbrook explained hastily, wishing inwardly that his physician had chosen another hour for his visit this morning, but determined to see him well through the ordeal of meeting the famous specialist who entertained such a loudly expressed contempt for mediocre country doctors. "He is coming to see his patients."

"Patients? At this house?"

"Yes. He is taking care of a patient whom I brought here two weeks ago, and——"

"What sort of patient?" the old man snapped.

"A paralytic, seventy-nine years old, and suffering a second attack——"

"Uh—I see! And may I inquire what he's giving the paralytic besides calomel and aconite, belladonna and digitalis, opium and caffeine?" he inquired.

"He's giving her nothing but strychnia and raw eggs," Holbrook answered hastily, for Doctor Cunningham was close to the foot of the steps by this time. "You're a little late this morning, aren't you?" he called out to the young physician, who had looked up in some surprise at the sight of a stranger on the porch. "Doctor van Zandt, may I present Doctor Cunningham, of Tal-ladoug?"

Each man of science bowed so stiffly that the other decided he must have tor-

ticollis. Doctor Cunningham tarried not a moment, hurrying on up the stairs, wearing his most professional air. The old doctor turned to Holbrook, astonishment and incredulity struggling with the twinkle in his eyes.

"Strychnia and raw eggs?" he demanded.

The younger man nodded.

"Well, I *will* swear!"

"But isn't that right?" Holbrook demanded in turn, some apprehension dawning in his eyes at the great man's vehemence.

"Right? Yes! That's why I'm swearing. I didn't think they had that much sense."

"This young fellow seems very well informed," Holbrook returned quietly. "Mr. Scullin came here from Florida yesterday—quite ill of malarial fever. Last night about ten o'clock he came in from a walk about the grounds, and it was discovered that he had a raging fever—the nurse-doctor here found that his temperature registered a hundred and five. She got thoroughly frightened, and sent in a great hurry for Doctor Cunningham."

At this news the old man sprang up from his chair.

"Now this is too much!" he exclaimed, with a shake of his huge fist. "If you want some dunderheaded young dope dealer tampering with *your* kin it's all right with me, but Ambrose Scullin is my own property when he's sick! By George, if that idiot has given him aconite, I'll—I'll have his license taken away——"

"But he gave him quinine!" Holbrook explained quickly, holding out his hand with a pacifying gesture. "He gave him a dose of it every hour—to ward off a return of the fever, he said."

The old doctor collapsed.

"Humph! If he has sense enough to do that, I think I'd better take him into partnership! I need a real doctor to run about the country when I'm tied up in New York."

"I've no doubt that Doctor Cunningham will be pleased to consider a proposition from you—he's not exactly

wedded to Talladougá," Holbrook answered, with some amusement.

"I'm not joking as much as you think!" the old fellow returned, rather grimly. "Whenever I find that I need a man to help me out in any part of my work, I take the next one I see whose countenance pleases me."

His voice had risen in proportion to his earnest vehemence, and in another moment Septimus had come to the front door, peering out curiously. At the sight of his master, his light-brown face underwent a quick change, and he discreetly smothered an exclamation of surprise, for it was one of the old physician's hobbies to walk in and catch his patients absolutely unawares.

Mrs. Colman was coming through the corridor at the time, but as Septimus held open the screen door for her his calm face told her nothing. She came out upon the piazza, her face glowing with a fresh, early-morning sparkle. The glance she threw toward the big old man held not half as much amazement as his own eyes betrayed when he first took in her changed appearance. She gave him an enthusiastic greeting, hurrying back into the hall, where she called to Adele to make haste and come downstairs. Presently the girl came, flushed and radiant when she saw who the unexpected arrival was.

The old doctor greeted her affectionately, holding her slim hand in his for a few moments, and stroking it gently as he asked her a few commonplace questions about the welfare of the others, but Holbrook saw that he was watching her with a searching scrutiny as he talked, and that the vague light of mystery had come into his eyes, clouding over their twinkle.

CHAPTER XIII.

The news flew all over the place, Septimus dispatching a little darty off to the creek to inform Mr. Farrel and Francis Wayne that their presence was requested at the house. Comynos and Cecelia Montrose came down reluctantly from the studio when one of the servants brought the message that Miss

le Noir wished to see them in the library. The big picture was nearing completion, and the artist was feeling the impatience that always attends the finishing touches of a piece of work. The impatience and reluctance took flight, however, when he saw that the great leather chair, which stood at the end of the library table, was occupied by its rightful owner.

Old John Farrel and Francis Wayne came in, questioning the call that had drawn them away from their morning's pleasure. Adele ran out to meet them, ordering them in by the back door, that they might make themselves presentable before being admitted into the council chamber. There was a pleasant stir and sense of excitement in the air. Holbrook was left out of it, of course, but he wondered that it could exist, and he felt thankful, with an aching sense of helplessness, that these people could be happy even for a little while.

They gathered about the long table, asking for news from the center of the world, boasting of changed feelings and greater potentialities, one or two even begging small indulgences in the way of an extra cigar a day, or a small cup of coffee more than the usual allowance; and the old doctor listened to each one's story, sometimes seeming to give less heed to the actual words that were being poured out to him than to the story he read in the sparkle of the eye, the flush of a tanned cheek—the easy bending of flexible muscles which had been strained in eagerness, or trembling with weakness, a few months before.

"And what is this I hear about Scullin, children?" he asked abruptly, as there was a little pause in the buzz of eager questions. "The first news that greeted me when I got here was that he frightened you out of your senses last night."

"It is really nothing worse than malaria," Mrs. Colman volunteered quickly, "but it did rather give us a turn—those of us who chanced to see him as he came in last night."

"'Came in?' Where had he been—the muttonhead?"

"He promised me at dinner that he would go straight to bed, for he looked very ill even then. But later he must have decided he'd walk around the grounds a bit, for he disappeared, and when he came in his temperature was a hundred and five! I was sitting in the hall just inside the door, and his face frightened me, so that I called Miss Brown. He was evidently delirious, and Miss Brown, in spite of her M. D., was scared half to death. Mr. Holbrook said——"

"Mr. Holbrook? Is he the fellow I met on the porch as I came in? He said he was an outsider that you'd taken in, but I forgot to ask him his name."

"Yes—he's the one," Mrs. Colman answered hastily, anxious to get on with her narrative, so that the physician might hurry up to the sick man's room, and give them all the relief of his own verdict that the trouble was nothing more serious than malaria. "Mr. Holbrook said that there were some temperaments that were thrown into delirium by the merest touch of fever, and he suggested that we send for Doctor Cunningham—which Miss Brown was very willing to do."

"And who did not give him anything worse than quinine," the old man threw in, rubbing his hands and allowing the twinkle to come to the surface again. "Ambrose is a muttonhead not to have sprinkled quinine on his grits instead of salt all the time he was in Florida—that's the only thing that can keep a tenderfoot alive down there!"

"Well, anyway, Mr. Holbrook seemed to have more coolness of judgment than Miss Brown, at the moment, so he helped Ambrose up to bed. Then Doctor Cunningham came and gave him some medicine, so that he is feeling much better this morning, Miss Brown says."

"Which I'll just run up and see the truth of, myself," the old fellow said, rising abruptly, and making for the door. "If it should happen to be aconite, by Heaven, I'll—I'll not take him into partnership, as I threatened!"

Without waiting for directions as to where Ambrose Scullin had been placed

to lodge, Doctor van Zandt went straight down the long, upstairs corridor to the suite of rooms always kept prepared for his own or Scullin's unexpected arrival. Miss Brown, the nurse, was just issuing from the door of the large bedroom at the front of the house.

She stopped short in surprise as she saw him, then she came forward and greeted him with a mixture of pleasure and relief.

"I'm so glad you've come, doctor, although the young man from Talladoga seems all right——"

"Just let me in here for a peep, will you?" he asked, brushing her aside and lumbering into the room. A wheel chair was standing in the middle of the floor, and the wisp of a creature huddled there was weakly picking at the silk shawl thrown about her. The old doctor could not repress a little start of surprise.

"I thought Scullin was in here," he said, lowering his voice and turning to the nurse for an explanation. "Who is this patient?"

"This is Mrs. Holbrook, sir. She was taken ill while touring through these mountains in a motor car, and Mr. Holbrook sought shelter here at this house, as there was no other place near, and they could not think of continuing their journey at the time. Doctor Cunningham has been in attendance—and her apparent rally has been marvelous. She has her own maid here to take care of her, but I've been looking in on her two or three times a day. It is paresis, as you see——"

"And senility," he muttered softly.

He bent above the thin form, but the patient, even as the two had stood beside her talking, had left off her restless picking at the shawl, and was dozing off into her morning nap; nor did her eyelids flutter open for more than a moment or two as the physician took up her hand and held it between his huge paws. He slid his fingers down the back of her hand, and slipped them around to the place where the lifeblood pulsed in a thin, ever-weakening stream. Then he placed the waferlike hand back

on its resting place on the arm of the chair.

He asked a few questions, showed a little gratified surprise at the treatment the nurse outlined to him; then, looking back at the tiny form before the window, turned to go. His heavy, lumbering gait, as he quitted the room, had changed, as if by magic, into a tread of quiet softness. It seemed as if he feared to jar the frail semblance of a woman, hovering so close upon the brink that an ungente breath might waft her over.

Down the corridor he tiptoed, and into the wing where the nurse told him Ambrose Scullin's room was located. He found the door slightly opened, and, knocking a little in a perfunctory way, he smiled to himself at the sound of the voice that bade him enter. It was weak in timbre and a trifle fretful, but it was not the thick, frightful tone of delirium.

The doctor entered, changing his gait and even his manner as he saw the figure of the husky young fellow lying there, prostrated by so simple a thing as a touch of swampy air! At the sound of the familiar, heavy tread the man on the bed turned his head toward the door eagerly. A smile of surprise and relief curved his pale lips.

"Didn't know you were coming so soon," he exclaimed, endeavoring to rise on his elbow as he held out his hand. "I'm glad, doctor!"

"Muttonhead!"

The physician grasped the weak wrist, waving back the effort the young man made to sit upright.

"It was the devilish mosquitoes, doctor."

The old man gave the hand a rough shaking.

"And you forgot your quinine! Or maybe you don't like the taste of quinine, eh? You're a bird—you are!"

"But I didn't think——"

"Of course you didn't, although you did this same trick last summer! If there's a bigger fool thing, Scullin, than taking medicine, it's *not* taking it!"

"The doctor they had to see me last night put me on a course of quinine

early this morning—long before the roosters were crowing for day."

"I've already sworn sufficiently downstairs over that bit of news."

"What? Wasn't it the right thing to do?"

"Exactly! That's the reason I'm swearing—in amazement! Why, you could have knocked me over with a peek-a-boo waist when I learned that he has been giving that poor little old paralyzed creature nothing more than strychnia and——"

"How is she?" the sick man asked, in a strained voice, as the nurse came into the room, having left her other patient with Marie. Doctor van Zandt made some quick, businesslike inquiries about the nature of the fever the night before, the pulse, temperature, et cetera, before he turned to answer the young man's question:

"The old lady, you mean?"

"Yes. Is she—better?"

The doctor resumed his seat beside the bed.

"Um—patients like that don't get better, Ambrose."

"But she's no worse? She may still linger for weeks?"

The doctor laughed, motioning the young fellow down.

"Are you the old woman's heir that you should be so eager to know how long she can live?" he asked. "Let me tell you, then, youngster, that anybody depending on *her* to die has a job on his hands equal to that of Tantalus, himself—and then some. She may live for months, but in her present condition a day's dearth of strychnia would mean that Nature has been permitted to take her course. I shall be glad when we doctors get to be as civilized as the savages in that respect! That poor old woman's body is fairly clamoring for death; she wants to go to sleep; Nature demands a rest for the worn-out heart. But because we doctors chance to know that there are a few drugs that have the faculty of helping to prolong life, we shoot these drugs into 'em right and left, helter-skelter, and let Nature go hang! It's wrong—all wrong, and still—I'm not quite man enough to say

stop it! We all scringe a little at signing a death certificate!"

The man on the bed had listened, attentively at first, with eyes wide open; then he had quickly narrowed the lids, as if to hide the expression that might be lurking there.

"Really wrong to keep them living, doctor?" he asked, in a strange, halting way.

"As sure as you're born, Ambrose! Yet," turning to the nurse with a whimsical smile, "you and I, Miss Brown, are not eager to shoulder the responsibility of righting this wrong, are we? Now, if you should happen to get Mr. Scullin's medicine confused with that of the other patient, it would not hurt Mr. Scullin—a first-year interne couldn't kill *him*—but the paralyzed patient wouldn't live long enough to send a blessing to her other grandchildren. A day's dearth of strychnia would end her struggles—poor little old worn-out machine! By the way, I wonder if she has other grandchildren besides that good-looking young fellow I met on the porch as I came in?"

The nurse turned scarlet and bent to mop up a spoonful of spilt water on the floor.

"She is not his grandmother. She is his wife."

The sick man's tones were quiet, even monotonous, yet the exclamation that greeted his announcement caused the nurse to give a startled jump.

"The devil! You're talking out of your head, Ambrose!"

"She is his wife," the tired voice repeated.

"Then all I've got to say is that he deserves at one dose the amount of strychnia she gets in a week! And I liked his face, too! Gad! I hate to make a false diagnosis!"

The nurse, gathering that the doctor's visit was at an end, made an excuse to leave the room before him. Seeing that they were alone, the old man came close to the bedside, bending over the prostrate figure.

"Scullin, there's nothing the matter with you but malaria, evidently; and the rough trip yesterday through the

sun *might* have been the cause of your fever running up to the degree it reached last night—but I don't believe it was that! You don't look exactly right! If you want to tell me what the trouble is, maybe I can help you out, boy!"

The man on the bed moistened his dry lips.

"It's a debt I owe—that's troubling me," he answered slowly.

The old doctor gave an impatient jerk.

"It's like young idiots to worry over debts," he exclaimed reproachfully. "If your salary is not enough to keep you going, why didn't you come to me and say so? The Lord knows I don't want to starve any fellow that works for me, much less one that takes as much of my worry on his shoulders as you take."

The sick man was silent for a moment.

"It is not a money debt," he then volunteered, still speaking with slow, halting breath. "It is something much greater than that. I—I didn't know until lately how great it really is."

The doctor waited a little while for him to tell more, but as he was silent, the old man realized that this was an affair into which he could not enter. He pressed no further questions, only taking the weak hand in his as he rose to go.

"All debts are troublesome until they're paid, Ambrose," he said, with a sudden effort toward gentleness. "Don't worry over yours any more than you can help while you're lying here sick, is my advice; then, just as soon as you're on your feet again, set about paying it."

The young fellow looked up at him with a strangely puzzled expression.

"I—it is a dilemma I'm in, doctor," he muttered weakly.

The physician pressed the lithe fingers lying inert in his.

"Then it's all the more reason why you shouldn't worry over it now. When you get well, if you care to confide in me, I may be able to suggest something."

But for an hour after the old man had left, the young fellow lay tossing on his bed, trying to get rid of a most distracting suggestion which Doctor van Zandt had all unconsciously given him.

He reviewed it in his mind a thousand times, and muttered the words over and over again, his sane self recoiling with horror at the frequency with which it returned to him. Still it kept recurring, taking sometimes the form of a half-mad, daring plan.

Late that afternoon the fever returned to him, bringing back distorted dreams, strange fancies—wild schemes; and the one thought that clung to his mind with a haunting promise was "a day's dearth of strychnia."

CHAPTER XIV.

It was well toward midnight when Doctor van Zandt awoke from a restless, troubled sleep. It was a boast of his that he never carried mental troubles to bed with him, so, as he sprang up impatiently and switched on the lights, he sought about in his memory for some physical scapegoat upon which to lay the blame of his broken slumber.

"It was the peaches and cream," he exclaimed vehemently, as he hunted about for his soft-soled bedroom slippers. "I was an idiot not to know that they would give me indigestion! I'll just slip down to the drug cabinet and see if this establishment affords any sodium bicarb; then I'll come back by Scullin's room and see——"

It came to him again, with an indefinable fear, that something was seriously wrong with his right-hand man; and it gave him more than a passing feeling of uneasiness to remember that it must have been his last look in upon the fevered, delirious young fellow, just before going to his own room to retire, that had given him the disagreeable impression which had followed him into the realm of dreams.

"By Jove, Ambrose looked bad!" he muttered; and, as was ever the case with him, anxiety took on the appearance of a blustering ferocity.

He gave a savage twist to the cords of his pajamas band, by way of preparation for sallying down the corridors and through the main portion of the first floor to the medicine cabinet. He tightened his night clothes as he walked, which was slowly enough, for the hall of the wing that he occupied was inky dark, and the switches for the lights placed at intervals unremembered by him. At the head of the steps he stopped a moment, for he fancied that he heard a door close somewhere down in the lower portion of the house; and remembering then that Miss Brown, the nurse, might be rambling downstairs in the vicinity of the kitchen or refrigerator, he turned and scurried back into his own room, to cover himself with a bath robe.

This garment secured, he groped again to the head of the steps, turning up the flame of a small, red-globed night lamp which, he knew, did not belong there, but for whose presence he was now very grateful. Once down on the first floor, he began groping again, his heelless slippers sliding silently across the waxed floor.

The room he sought was at the back of the house, a tiny apartment, shut off from the butler's pantry, and containing some built-in shelves that would have appealed to the heart of a thoroughgoing housewife as being an ideal place to store away the winter's supply of preserves. But the present occupants of the house had overlooked this closet's possibilities in this line, and used the shelves to hold an accumulation of medicine bottles, whisky, aromatic ammonia, witch-hazel—all the so-called family remedies—while on the bottom shelf there was a prim row of very small boxes. These contained the emergency drugs, the tiny, but immensely potent, white tablets which are not needed very often in a household, but which, when they are called into requisition, it is not well to have missing.

"I bet they haven't anything that looks like sodium bicarb," the old doctor growled, as he swung the door of the butler's pantry noiselessly to behind

him. "And when I have to go into the kitchen for soda I always get hold of baking powder, instead."

He felt his way along cautiously, avoiding the tip of a broomstick which had been carelessly left in one corner, its end projecting far enough out to trip the unwary, and starting back a little as he saw outlined before him, dimly by the waning moon, the broad side of a white-sheeted ironing board.

"Lord! Wonder if I'm getting nervous—at my time o' life?" he chuckled, half ashamed as he saw what the ghastly object was; then, a moment later, he stumbled slightly against the door he sought, which swung wide at his rough touch.

In the half second that elapsed before he could get his eyes accustomed to the full glare of the light that was glowing inside the cabinet, he had discerned the outline of a man's figure standing there. Bending forward anxiously and half closing his eyes against the unexpected glare, Doctor van Zandt saw that it was Ambrose Scullin huddled close beside the littered shelf. He held a small, round box in his hand, while he bent his head, with an air of great absorption, above a row of tiny white tablets outspread before him. He, too, was in night dress and slippers, and one glance of the glittering eyes showed the physician that the young fellow was suffering from delirium, which in certain temperaments comes with high fever.

"Lordy, Ambrose, you gave me a scare!" the old man said, endeavoring to speak in a natural tone. "I thought maybe I was running up on some fair Aphrodite, in naught but her nighty! I've got an infernal indigestion! See any soda there?"

"No."

The young man had not moved his eyes from the physician's face. He spoke automatically, retaining his bent posture above the row of tiny white disks outspread before him. The box he crushed quickly in his hand.

"Well, if you can't see it, suppose you get out of my way and let me look for it," the physician exclaimed, won-

dering anxiously just how he would better proceed in the matter of getting the young fellow back to bed without showing any alarm at finding him there.

At the doctor's suggestion, the sick man moved slightly to one side, saying nothing.

"Morphia, atropia, nitroglycerin—just as I expected! Not a dust of soda! No strychnia either, unless——"

The other man started, picking up a handful of the little tablets before him and dropping them into the crumpled box. He rattled them together, in a detached fashion.

"Is that the strychnia you have, Ambrose?" the old doctor asked quietly, although his heart had contracted with a quick fear.

"Yes—that's what the box is labeled."

"What are you doing with it?"

"I need it."

Doctor van Zandt suddenly changed his tactics. It was not the time now for pretense. It might already be too late. He grasped the young fellow roughly by the arm.

"To kill yourself with, fool boy?" he demanded, holding out his hand sternly for the box.

The sick man closed his fingers over the crumpled pasteboard stubbornly, but he was silent.

"Of course there's a woman mixed up in this some way," the old man kept on savagely, holding one hand upon the young fellow's arm, as he attempted to pull open a drawer beneath the shelf where he remembered that the stomach tube was kept. "A woman—oh, idiot! There are other women in the world."

"But there's only one who stands between him and his chance for even a little space of happiness!" the other man returned, speaking in so deliberate a fashion and wearing so blank an expression of unconsciousness, that the physician realized the normal, sane-working mind was wandering far away. "It was my fault that she was placed there. It is only right that I should get her out of the way!"

The doctor gave a gasp of astonishment and disbelief.

"Oh—to kill somebody else! Is that why you are trying to get all the strychnia there is?"

"I am exchanging the strychnia for harmless blank tablets," the monotonous voice went on, the simple, business-like statement of facts sounding weird and unbelievable. "You said this morning that a day's dearth of strychnia would allow her to pass away, as nature intends."

"What! The little old lady?"

The other man nodded. His eyes, though filled with delirium, were strangely unflinching. Even the doctor's loud, incredulous words had not caused him to shrink. It was as if his actions were regulated by some mechanism outside his own consciousness.

"But what the devil have you got against her?"

The young fellow hesitated, but only for a moment, as if he were trying to remember.

"She is my brother's wife," he answered, still calmly, although his eyes burned as if there were glowing coals behind them. "He married her six years ago—to save me from prison. Striped clothes had never been worn by a member of our family—and we were always proud. My father would have died of shame! Then he *did* die of shame because my brother had married a rich old woman for her money! But there was no other way to help me out,—he did it. I hadn't stolen the money, but I had listened to speculators—and people called it—embezzling."

There was a sound in the passageway behind them. A rustling skirt had brushed against the walls in a frightened scamper, then all was quiet until a quick sob greeted the last words, which had come out with a shamed hesitancy.

Adele le Noir, restless and wakeful, had sat up late in the library, reading. She had heard, through the stillness of the house, the sound of raised voices, and she had come to see.

The physician, catching a glimpse of her white, frightened face at the door, motioned her back. The sick man, half

crazed by the fever, was absorbed in his story.

"I was sorry when I learned what Douglas had done to get the money I needed, but I paid the bank in Baton Rouge and went to New York, where I changed my name and began life all over! I have not been happy, but I was able to forget a little what he might be enduring, until I met him here yesterday, and saw the change that had taken place in him. Then, last night, I was so thirsty that I went down to the spring where I could drink all I wanted without anybody seeing how ill I was. He came down there—with Adele le Noir! I could not go without letting them know that I had heard! Finally I was so thirsty that I had to reach out for another drink. Douglas thought it was a snake crawling under the drip! It came to me then that I *was* a snake if I didn't do something to help him out—and quickly! Adele may die tomorrow—Miss Jane, the woman he is married to, may live for months!"

He looked again at the box in his hand. There was a certain stubborn determination in his manner. Doctor van Zandt came up to him and laid his great hand with infinite gentleness upon his arm. He caught the eyes of the sick man squarely, with a compelling look of penetration.

"Ambrose!" His voice was calm and clear, the tones soothing, even as they compelled attention. "Ambrose, you are ill of fever. You are delirious tonight. You have had a bad dream—a very bad dream! Do you hear me, Ambrose?"

The sick man stared at him, a sort of half-flitting comprehension in his eyes.

"In the morning you will remember only this—that you have had a bad dream."

Gently, the physician took the box from the young fellow's hand. Making a sign to the girl at the door to disappear, he led him out into the hallway and up the steps, lighted now by the small reading lamp which the nurse had placed there to aid her in her midnight journeyings up and down the staircase. In the upper corridor he delivered the

patient over into the hands of Miss Brown, who had come back into the sick room to find her charge missing.

"Come on back to bed, Mr. Scullin; it is time for your next powders," she said, taking her cue from Doctor van Zandt and forbearing to show any astonishment. He followed her, his manner less docile than lethargic.

Doctor van Zandt went quickly back down the stairs. Meeting Adele le Noir in the lower hall, he paused before her, his face and voice solemn.

"How much of that was madness, and how much truth we cannot tell tonight, Adele! To-morrow we will sift it out! And to-morrow," looking at her with a scintillating spark of excitement in his eyes, "to-morrow I will tell you—a great joke on myself! It is a secret, mind; no one else must know. But it is a great joke on me—and it has gone quite far enough."

CHAPTER XV.

The next morning the nurse, who was worn out by her long, anxious vigil, was ordered off to bed. Doctor van Zandt had come into the room very early, and, seeing that the fever had left the patient for the time, had given Miss Brown a peremptory leave of absence, suggesting a quiet room in the farther wing, where she might have the sleep she so badly needed.

"So, Scullin, you're normal again?" the physician said, seeing that the sick man was looking up at him with dark-circled, inquiring eyes. "We're all pretty bad mollycoddles when we're flat on our backs, aren't we?"

"Let me up, please, doctor! I'm restless; and lying here fuming will do me more harm than sitting up, I believe."

The physician sat for a long minute, considering.

"It is a hot morning—and I'm due downstairs in the library for a consultation with Miss le Noir in a little while, so I can't stay here watching you, to see that you don't fret yourself back into a fever."

"If you just let me out of this room!" the young fellow pleaded. "Anything

is better than this feeling of being—inert."

"But that's just what you've got to be until we can get that miserable malaria out of you!" the old man assured him grimly. "Inert! Why, what would you expect to be, boy?"

The man on the bed looked at the doctor with a puzzled expression.

"Of course I know that I can't be moving about much, but I have a horror of staying still in this room, somehow. I had a miserable dream last night, and it stays with me. I want to get outside these four walls."

"Fever patients frequently go batty in the night," the physician answered quickly. "Perhaps it would make you feel a bit more cheerful to slip on something and stroll out to the veranda for a spell. This room is stuffy, and—there are some magazines out there. Look over the bright-colored ones and forget about your dream."

"I wish I could," the young fellow replied, still with his expression of half-ashamed wonder; but without further discussion of the matter, the doctor made an excuse to leave the room rather hastily, and the patient crept out of bed tremblingly, yet with a sort of eager impatience. He slipped on a pair of light trousers and a thin smoking jacket over his night clothes, then made his way, still trembling with physical exhaustion, out into the hall.

On the way to the door that led out upon the veranda, he must pass close to the suite of rooms which he knew were occupied by his brother and the little old woman who had been the fairy godmother of his boyhood; and his forehead broke out with a nervous perspiration as he realized the possibility of his seeing her again. There was not the slightest chance of her recognizing him, he felt sure, having heard from Douglas the condition of her mind; it was the strange medley of feelings toward her that gave him his nervous tremors—then that weird, uncanny dream the night before! It haunted him with a persistent feeling of reality. Still, he felt that he should like to see her again, if for no other

purpose than to convince himself that the hideous thing had been nothing more than a dream.

The room occupied by Miss Jane was quite deserted, he thought at first, as he glanced in and saw the bed unoccupied; but upon gaining the veranda and walking slowly down to the corner where the comfortable couch was drawn, he passed close to the alcove window and saw that the wheel chair had been pushed into its depths. The filmy white curtain had blown back against the chair, disclosing to view the thin little wrinkled face, so familiar to him, yet so greatly changed since he had seen it last. The screen had been removed from the window to allow a fuller current of air, so that, as he passed, hesitating, and taking in eagerly every detail of her altered appearance, it was quite as if they were in the same room. She looked up at him with child-like curiosity as she saw his shadow fall across her window, and his glance came full upon her upturned face.

Marie, the maid, hearing his footsteps, hastened across the room, without glancing up at the window, so sure was she of the man outside on the veranda. She called out to him quickly:

"Mr. Holbrook, can you come in and stay with Miss Jane for a few minutes, while I go downstairs and fix her egg-nog?" Then, looking up and meeting the eyes of the strange, bearded gentleman, she blushed prettily and begged his pardon.

"But there's no harm done," the man assured her hastily. "I am an invalid, myself, this morning, and I can just sit here by your—your mistress quite easily."

The maid had come close, and the young fellow had spoken in a low voice, his face turned away from the little woman in the chair, so that she had been unable to hear what was being said. He drew up a chair beside the window, and sat down.

"If you would be so kind, sir," the girl whispered gratefully. "I always like to have some one with her when I leave her, even for a few minutes, and

this morning the doctor said that—her heart action is not nearly so good."

The man drew his chair up closer as the servant tripped away, and Miss Jane, opening her faded blue eyes listlessly, looked at him for a moment; but his bearded face held no interest for her, and she rested her head back against the pillow again, with a sigh that seemed to speak of unutterable fatigue.

The young fellow, as he sat and studied her kind little face, and the absolute helplessness of her fragile body, felt a great wave of remorse sweep over him. That dream of last night clung to his memory with a hateful tenacity. He was beset with a storm of self-reproach. He remembered how fond she had always been to him and Douglas in the old days! Even though it was by the sacrifice which Douglas had made that his own redemption had been brought about, it was Miss Jane's money that had paid the price of his freedom!

These thoughts and half-forgotten memories came flocking back now, working upon his mind powerfully. His great physical weakness rendered him pitifully susceptible to their harrowing influence. He could not tell, for his life, how much of that dream the night before had been true; but he did recall, with a shudder of remorse, that he had spent the whole of the day planning how Douglas might be set free from his obligation! His revulsion of feeling, as he gazed at her helplessness, and recalled all that she had been to him, was overwhelming. He felt a sudden and irresistible impulse to beg her pardon.

There was no other person in sight. Marie had scampered away through the length of the hall and down the steps. He and Miss Jane were quite alone! He stretched out his hand and drew the wheel chair up against the window ledge. He bent above the withered hand which he had picked up in his own. His lips brushed lightly against its wrinkled, blue-veined back.

"Miss Jane, forgive me!"

At the sound of his voice, which she

heard for the first time in so many years, and which, to her dulled understanding, was not to be dissociated now from that other voice stilled for half a century, her eyes opened wide, first in a wondering terror, which, after a moment of what seemed to be wavering doubt, passed into a smile of understanding; then a look of inexpressible peace and joy flitted across her face.

"Forgive me!"

The voice was insistent, and she closed her eyes, as if she were seeing faces that were and must be shut away from mortal view. There was a feeble pressure of the shrunken fingers against his, but she could not speak. Two tears welled up under the closed lids, and were coursing down the age-lined face.

"Forgive me! It was all a mad dream! I could not really hurt you!"

She heard his words, but she seemed a moment after to fall into the fitful slumber which came to her at intervals through the morning. The man sat and gazed at her, filled with wonder and awe; his sensitive lips were twitching nervously, and his eyes were filled with mist. When he heard the footsteps of the maid returning through the hall, he arose quickly from his chair; and before she could come up to the window and thank him for the little service he had rendered, he had disappeared, leaving the veranda deserted.

CHAPTER XVI.

Down in the library, the doctor was having a bad quarter of an hour. He and Adele le Noir sat facing each other across the shining table. He had some news to tell her, and it required very diplomatic telling—it was a much more delicate piece of business, often, than that other news which he had disclosed to her months ago, and which she had met so bravely. Somehow, there was never very much bravery displayed at these second recitals of his; and he always hated so to see a woman cry.

"Adele, all of you here think I'm a pretty good sort of a fellow at diagnosis, eh?"

The girl opposite him, sitting with white face and nerves quivering, cast a

glance of pleading reproach at the old man, as if begging him not to keep her in suspense with idle questionings.

"I mean that you've each one taken me at my word, haven't you? You've eliminated the quiver from your daily thought?"

"You know that we have been born again!"

Her voice was deep with feeling, and the old man smiled.

"Ah! So you really think that you're better?"

She shook her head.

"I don't know! We seem better! Sometimes it has even occurred to me, lately, that you might be—mistaken!"

He looked at her searchingly.

"What! You doubt my prognosis?"

"We have forgotten to keep it before us," she answered slowly. "We have all found other things to think about."

There was a twinkle in his half-hidden eyes as he brought his hand down firmly upon the table.

"That's exactly what the seventy-two others have told me!"

She looked at him in wonder.

"The seventy-two others?" she asked, and it appeared to the physician that she was extremely dull of comprehension that morning. He rose in his place and stood looking down at her.

"Adele, in the ten years that I have owned this place I have sent only seventy-two patients here. It is not every one to whom a doctor can afford to tell the truth! And of these seventy-two, not one has left here thinking that I had been right in my—prognosis."

The girl lifted her face to him. Her eyes were alive with fire.

"Don't trifle with me," she begged.

"And I've come gradually to see it in their light," he kept on, as if he had not heard the note of pleading in her voice. "I've been convinced each time that I had made a wrong prognosis in their case, and so that there was nothing for me to do but to tell them the truth—that I was mistaken—"

She had bowed her head on her folded arms. For a few moments he heard great sobs shaking her body, but he kept silent, and let her weep, for

he knew that when she lifted her head again her face would be glorified.

A quarter of an hour had passed before she looked up, meeting his eyes, and he knew that the sweet visions that had floated through her brain those last few minutes had not held a revived picture of herself on a concert stage.

"I told you once that no patient who had ever been to this place related the story of it to others, didn't I?" he finally asked.

"Yes."

"And, of course, you understand now the reason. Each one has come under the same circumstances that sent you here—a victim to ambition. And each time my prognosis has proven false."

She smiled.

"I see! I see it all. You don't scare your patients to death, you literally scare them to life! Doctor van Zandt, you are a wizard!"

"And you are a brick, pretty maiden," he answered, striving after a tone of lightness, as she came around to his side of the table with hands outstretched. "I didn't intend to tell you yet, but last night——"

"Yes, of course! And I must get away from here quickly, or I should let my joy betray the secret to the others."

"And the others must not know for a while. Cecelia Montrose, poor child, not at all! My prognosis in her case is going to prove correct, I am afraid; still, it's better for her to be here than in that maelstrom of society she was enduring when she first came to me! She was trying to make herself endurable to her mother and sisters."

"And I am sure that a prolonged life to her now would be the most cruel fate of all," the girl returned sadly. "She is in love—madly in love with Peter Comynos."

The old man nodded his head slowly.

"I know it! Still, it has done them both good. It has given her a new impetus for the days she has left, and it has been of inestimable benefit to him."

Before the girl could reply the library door opened, and Douglas Hol-

brook stood at the threshold. His pale face wore a look of excitement.

"Can you come with me?" he asked hurriedly, addressing Doctor van Zandt. "Septimus came for me while I was out in the garden gathering these." He held out the bunch of pink rosebuds in his hands. "He says that Mrs. Holbrook is—not so well! She seems strangely excited over something, and the nurse is uneasy about her condition. Doctor Cunningham is late this morning! Will you come?"

He hurried away, and Adele le Noir knew that he had not more than glanced in her direction. All his thought at the moment was for the woman upstairs, who looked to him alone of all the world for a feeling of kinship when she lay dying; and even in the confusion of her thoughts at the moment, the girl's heart was singing a note of praise for her loyal knight.

CHAPTER XVII.

Holbrook sped up the stairs. Inside the room all was very quiet. The nurse was at the door, watching with excited face for his coming. In front of the still-opened window the wheel chair was standing in its accustomed place. Crouched down before it, the English maid was crying softly.

The eyes of the tiny old woman opened as she heard Holbrook's step approaching.

"Douglas!"

"Yes! Yes, Miss Jane!"

He came close, his face pale with agitation. He had forgotten to throw the roses aside, and, as he bent above her, she smiled at their gay color. They dropped from his trembling hands to the snowy linen gown she wore, and lay there, a mass of youthful sweetness.

"Douglas, I have heard Tom Holbrook's voice! Your Uncle Tom's voice, dear! It was very plain, although I was half asleep! He asked me to forgive him!"

Her faded eyes were shining with a beatitude which Douglas Holbrook knew now was euthanasia.

"I am going away very soon! I want

you to be happy after I have left you, for you have been a good nephew! I—I have heard Tom Holbrook's voice, and I—am——"

Doctor van Zandt hurried in. As he reached the patient's side there was still a feeble spark.

"Such a good nephew—dear——"

There was a silence. Holbrook dropped to his knees, catching the small, cold hands, and holding them. His face was pressed against the snowy gown. She had loved him always, and she had wanted to be kind to him! She was the gentlest being he had ever known. He had found a strange, calm peace in caring for her! Now his charge, his burden, was slipping away from him! A father, watching an afflicted child passing away, might have felt the same

sense of aching loneliness. He had grown so used to seeing her kind little face.

The hands in his grew colder. The tiny body stirred no more. The doctor touched his arm, and when he looked up he saw that she was still smiling.

Stirred by his movement, the roses dropped down from her breast to the small hands which he could not warm. Stabbed by the knowledge that this was the last service he would ever do for her—that he had given her a moment's pleasure for the last time—he pressed the flowers into the icy fingers.

"Poor little lady!" he whispered, his lips close to the lifeless hands, covered now with roses. "You were always kind! *Dear little lady!*"



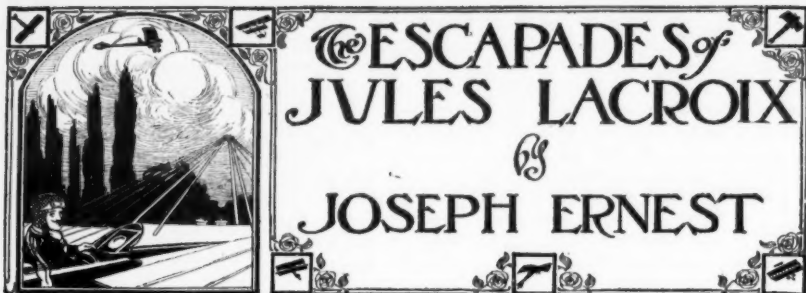
THE END

GRAY, as the face of a cliff is gray,
 You said: "Here is the end."
 I smiled—the smile of an April day,
 And flung a kiss to—my friend.
 And yet—we knew. Love all unsought,
 Had flamed to a scorching breath—
 Now—now—the cool green tides have wrought,
 The bliss blind men call Death.

She that was me lies white and chill,
 Your lips upon her face;
 Surely dead—else her heart would thrill
 At your kiss, your close embrace.
 So shall we lie till the trumpet sounds,
 And the floors of ocean rise,
 In the long Last Day, when earth's wide bounds
 Melt to the bending skies.

Till that Last Day when the trumpet cry
 Shall make the heavens a scroll,
 With the ranging spheres we shall lightly fly,
 Joying soul in soul,
 And thus we shall sing in our wheeling flight
 To the high white spheres above:
 "We have flown to the end of life and light,
 But not to the end of love."

MARTHA McCULLOCH-WILLIAMS.



I.—The Episode of the Disappearing Financier

ME voici! Behold me also in full boulevard once more—the same Jules Lacroix who had the honor to pilot mon-sieur on his first flight above Long Island, and speaking now very perfectly your language, as monsieur will observe. You will condescend—perhaps a little *apéritif*? I am flattered.

Yes, the same Jules Lacroix, but now how different! I was then simple mechanic. To-day my name is in all the journals, I am courted, flattered, admired. In the streets, in the cafés, people point me out to each other. "Look!" I hear them say. "There goes that devil of a fellow Lacroix, who ducked the German ambassador at Deauville. *Geste superbe!* What will he do next?"

Monsieur has not heard? I protest that my motor unaccountably failed. Absolutely without intention I administered to my august passenger a most profound bath in the sea. But no one will believe that the motor of Jules Lacroix could fail of itself, and the episode is accepted by Parisians as a practical joke of the most spiritual. For me it is most embarrassing.

What do I here in Paris, my flying suit of rubber cloth exchanged for the black habit and white chemise of evening? Mystery! Ah, monsieur has guessed—it is an affair of the heart, a devotion inspiring, consuming, hopeless! I may confide? Without doubt,

as monsieur so charmingly observes, we are old comrades.

You have seen that I broke recently the record of height? I have described above my own signature in three journals my emotions on finding my gasoline exhausted while still a thousand mètres in air. But it mattered little to me, only that I planed down at greater speed to meet my fate!

You picture me, then, diving down from the cirrus clouds upon the little village of Berneuil in the Eure. I summon my mechanic from Paris, I rest, I dine, and when my baggage arrives I dress and stroll forth with pleasant thoughts of the twelve thousand francs I had won, and the lucrative engagements that would follow. I am free as the air, with allegiance to nothing but my career of aviator.

And then, monsieur, two miles beyond the village I come upon her—the beautiful Mademoiselle Warren. Ah, you start, you exclaim, you are interested! Yes, there need be no concealment. She is of the Hamilton Warrens, of Newport—the splendid, gracious Miss Ella Warren, no less, and an heiress, as all the world knows, of wealth stupendous.

Now you can understand my emotion, on sauntering round a bend in the road, to confront suddenly a beauty of form and face famous in the Old World, as in the New. *Dieu!* I am entranced, I am spellbound! In that one instant I am no longer a free man,

but her willing slave. What would you? I am of the Midi, the burning South.

She stood by the open bonnet of a long and powerful touring automobile. Her chauffeur, having vainly worked levers, joined her in staring at the silent mechanism and wringing his hands. Without hesitation I crossed the road.

I was attired, you understand, in a strictly American suit of mauve, with heliotrope tie and hose, purple velvet hat, and shoes of patent leather. As I bowed I was conscious of creating at once an impression of the most prepossessing.

"Mademoiselle will accept a thousand apologies," I said, "for the ambition that I may be of use in her obvious emergency."

"You are too kind, sir," replied mademoiselle. "I have, nevertheless, every confidence in the ability of my chauffeur."

"Without reflection on his competence," I insisted, "it is Jules Lacroix, mademoiselle, who assures you that your car will not move an inch to-night unless behind a farmer's horse and a towrope."

Just at that moment, you understand, the chauffeur was once more at work upon his levers, and a sound came from the motor that, if I had heard it from my own *aéroplane* engine while aloft, would have filled me with despair. The spindle of the magneto was broken, and, as I had suspected, the car was not provided with dual ignition.

Doubtless you have often seen photographs of the famous Miss Warren in the society pages of the newspapers. You know those large, glamorous eyes of hers that shine like rare enamel, that firm, square chin, and chiseled nostril of the true patrician. But you miss the brilliance of her expression, her coloring so richly dark, the regal poise of figure that even her heavy auto wrap could not conceal. You cannot imagine the thrill of her voice, the splendor of the smile that struggled out through her anxiety as the sun struggles through rain clouds!

"You are the aviator Lacroix?" she

said, scrutinizing me with, perhaps, a pardonable interest. "Then I can quite believe, since you ducked the ambassador at Deauville, that when you say an engine will not work, you know very definitely what you are talking about!"

I bowed, and, as the gathering dusk made examination difficult, I caused the chauffeur to unship a lamp and show the seat of the trouble in bright illumination.

"It is in effect so," he groaned. "And mademoiselle would not permit me to wait for batteries."

"Can you suggest nothing, Monsieur Lacroix?" asked the girl, turning to me in appeal. "It is of the most urgent importance that I should reach Paris this evening."

"There is only one means of doing so, at this hour," I replied, "and that is to fly there!"

"But monsieur jests—I cannot fly."

"Pardon, I am quite serious. I myself have some skill as an aviator."

The girl started forward eagerly, even seizing the sleeve of my coat in her astonishment and joy.

"You mean, monsieur, that you would take me as your passenger?"

"My monoplane, the *Dragon Fly*, on which I have just had the honor to break the record of height, is at the service of mademoiselle—as its pilot will always be," I responded, bowing once more.

"I thank you, Monsieur Lacroix. Let us go!" said the girl, as simply and calmly as if I had merely offered her my seat on a Channel steamer. Ah, the courage of these gently nurtured young women who have never been hurt! I confess that it was not without a thrill that I myself set out with her for my hangar to commence that night journey.

Behold us, then, stoutly tramping back to Berneuil in the gathering gloom. On the way mademoiselle confided to me that her father, the eminent financier, had mysteriously disappeared from his apartment in the Hotel Splendide in circumstances giving rise to profound anxiety in the mind of his sister-in-law, who had arrived in Paris

that morning. It was she who had by telegraph besought mademoiselle to return with all haste from the château near Berneuil, at which she had been visiting friends. For years since he had attained to his position so commanding in the world of finance, it appeared, Monsieur Warren had been the recipient of threatening letters, certain of them signed in red.

"Moreover," added mademoiselle sorrowfully, "he is a great invalid. Indeed, my aunt had traveled specially from Vermont in order to care for him. I dare not think what may have happened."

I endeavored to comfort her by praise of the Paris detective force and the power of publicity.

"Ah, no!" exclaimed the girl quickly. "It is to prevent any rumor of my father's absence leaking out that I hasten to Paris. If a whisper should reach New York, it might cause the most serious dislocation of his affairs. The mere statement that he is ill has before now caused a slump on the Stock Exchange."

A moment later we reached the hangar, to find my faithful mechanic, Georges, already arrived, and busily completing his overhauling of the *Dragon Fly*. I braced up the tail a little to increase the lift, altered my inclinometer for the extra load, and, before Georges had recovered from his amazement, the trusty machine was wheeled into the open.

"We go to Paris," I told him, with great calmness. "You will follow by an early train."

"But it will be dark," protested the good fellow. "How does m'sieur propose to make a landing?"

"That we shall see when the time comes. Have the goodness to start the motor."

While he did so, I rapidly slipped on my overalls and leather flying helmet, and assisted Mademoiselle Warren into the passenger's seat. A moment to try the engine—ah, my beautiful Austro-Normale! with a single splutter, as Georges turned the propeller, she had settled into her stride and was

running as sweetly as a sewing machine—then, with a rasp of a tiny lever, I whipped her into her full hundred horse power, and away we went, rolling and bouncing over the turf in the dark.

Directly ahead of us a hedge appeared out of the gloom, but what was that to me? With a single touch of my elevator lever we cleared it at a bound as a horse leaps, and also the ditch beyond it. Another twenty yards, and the rocking and bouncing ceased, and I knew by our perfectly smooth motion that we were riding on the air. And then the moon appeared.

The thrilling joy of that dash to Paris! It was, indeed, as if we floated upon a lake smooth as glass, limpid and translucent, of whose bed far below one might see every detail. Before me a single spot of yellow electric light lit up my instruments. Behind me, and a little to the left, by turning my head I could see the beautiful face of my companion, her eyes wide with the enthusiasm of her maiden flight.

What wonder that, in my transcendent emotion, knowing that she could not hear me above the roar of the motor, I sang aloud as I gripped my lever, and from my heart I pitied those who had never flown!

And so at length, flying at a thousand feet, we came in sight of the Eiffel Tower, a gaunt, black skeleton rising from the apartment houses on the banks of the Seine, and a little farther along the river, upon the great gray waste of the military parade ground of Issy-les-Moulineaux.

I had intended to alight in the brilliant illumination of the Place de la Concorde, but on a previous occasion there, I had knocked down a lamp-post with a biplane, and had received a stern warning from the authorities. The traffic, also, made the experiment perilous, and at the last my heart failed me when I thought of my lovely passenger. I turned sharply to the left, and presently we circled over the dark parade ground.

Landing in an *aéroplane*, monsieur, is a most difficult operation at the best of times. It is necessary to dive until

one imagines that one can see each separate pebble and blade of grass before assuming once more a horizontal attitude to take the ground correctly. At night it is especially delicate—an operation comparable to leaping down stairs in the dark when one has no idea how many stairs there may be. Fortunately, in the hangars of Issy, work never ceases. I decided to fly round and round the ground until the sound of my motor should attract attention.

The idea was successful. From a dozen hangars appeared mechanics and aviators carrying flares and lanterns, like fireflies in the gloom, so that at last we settled softly as a snowflake near the entrance to the parade ground, to be surrounded in an instant by a torch-lit group of clamoring enthusiasts.

It was a veritable triumph! They cheered for mademoiselle, helping her to alight, pale and chilled, but more than ever beautiful and erect. They cheered for Jules Lacroix, for the *Dragon Fly*, and for the record of height established two days before, and finally borrowed for us an automobile. We reached the Hotel Splendide without collision with a single taxicab, and I had the satisfaction to see mademoiselle embraced by her aunt in the luxurious dining room of the Warren apartment.

"You would always be eccentric, Ella," said her aunt grimly. "It was a mercy you had not time to inform me of your intention to fly here, so adding to my other anxieties."

"But father?" interrupted Miss Warren. "Have you heard nothing?"

"Nothing directly. He went out last night for his usual promenade on the Boulevard des Italiens after dinner, since when he has not been beheld by any one whom I can discover. To-day I received this *pneumatique*, saying that he was called away on urgent affairs, and would be absent indefinitely."

She handed the telegram to her niece, folded her arms, and watched her sternly.

"But this is not my father's handwriting!" exclaimed the girl.

"Exactly! That is why I telegraphed to you to return. But it is not the only circumstance that gives rise to fears. For two nights previously a stranger, unknown to the hotel servants or to Mr. Warren's valet, has been seen to engage him in conversation in the salon of the hotel. Further, on one occasion the valet surprised him at the entrance to Mr. Warren's apartment. He was bending down and calling softly through the keyhole. The valet overheard the words, several times repeated: 'Pale dry Manhattans with olives in them'—doubtless some secret shibboleth. When accosted the stranger departed with great abruptness."

"But what did my father say concerning this man?" asked the girl.

"I am coming to that. The door was locked, and when the valet knocked upon it and told him of the affair, he appeared very much perturbed, swore at the poor fellow, and commanded him to mind his own business. Finally, when he went out last evening, I am assured that the mysterious stranger, who had been sitting alone for some time in the entrance hall behind a pillar, promptly arose and followed him. Responsible as I am for my poor brother-in-law's health since he became a widower, I cannot rest a moment until all cause for anxiety is removed. He must be found, and at once!"

Ah, the temperament, the strength of mind of your American ladies! In every stern line of her iron features, in every angle of her figure so muscular and robust, I saw the determination of character that has made America great.

"Yes, but how?" demanded Miss Warren. "It is unthinkable that anything should be made public!"

"But consider, child, the state of your father's health. With his weak heart, the least shock or exposure may prove fatal. And here are cablegrams and letters from persons of obvious importance, which, I am sure, demand immediate attention."

She pointed to a pile of unopened correspondence that lay on the table.

"Do you not think, Monsieur La-

croix," turning to me, "you who know so well the dangers that beset the foreigner in the streets of Paris, that the facts justify an appeal to the police?"

Mademoiselle made an exclamation of dismay, almost of horror. I felt that she relied upon me for the support of her position.

"Madame, I do not," I replied. "On the other hand, I detect in what you have told mademoiselle certain definite clues which should make it a simple matter for me to discover the whereabouts of Monsieur Warren without publicity or any great delay. If madame will so far confide in me, I will at once undertake the investigation."

The trusting gratitude of Mademoiselle Warren, I assure you, was more than sufficient reward in advance. Have you not noticed that in all men who control powerful machinery there is some quality which attracts the confidence of women? I do not flatter myself that I am handsome. But—is it not so, monsieur?—the ability to dare and achieve lends a certain charm.

I asked Madame Hamilton first to describe the stranger who had been seen to follow Mr. Warren.

"I cannot do so from observation," she replied, "for I arrived in Paris only this morning. But my poor brother-in-law's valet says that he was a short, thickset man, with silver-white hair, obviously an American."

"Probably himself the writer of the *petit bleu* purporting to come from Mr. Warren," I said. "If madame will permit me to examine it—ah, I observe that it was handed in at the Bourse this morning. Do I not recall having read that Monsieur Warren is himself white-headed? Perfectly! Then we have two white-haired American gentlemen, who are not likely to have escaped observation on the boulevards. I will commence inquiries at once. Meanwhile, it would be advisable to request the management of the hotel to maintain silence on the subject."

"We will make that request," replied Madame Hamilton. "I wish you good fortune, Monsieur Lacroix, for I have grave fears."

She turned sadly to her niece.

"To-day I discovered," she said, "that he has discarded his woollens entirely without authority or reason. He has become altogether too venturesome since I relaxed my vigilance for a time, and this is the result! Oh, why did I ever allow him to leave my sight?"

I left them to console each other, and, after half an hour's search, succeeded in discovering the man who had handed in the telegram. This was possible with the greater facility, because he happened to be the uniformed porter of a restaurant near the Madeleine, and a well-known figure to promenaders. He said that the telegram had been given to him very late on the previous evening by a man who spoke execrable French, but tipped generously, and whose instructions were explicit that it was not to be dispatched until the next morning.

"He was an American monsieur with hair of silvery white," added the porter.

"He! It is he!" I cried. "Without doubt he was short, stout, and clean-shaven."

"On the contrary," replied the man, "the monsieur who gave me the *pneumatique* that monsieur has just shown to me was a monsieur most unequivocally thin, and wore a gray mustache."

"How? A third silver-haired American? This becomes a plot. He was, no doubt, alone?"

"No, monsieur, he descended from a taxi-auto in which were two other men. I could not see their faces, but I know they were both men, because I saw the red glow of their cigars. I was fortunate enough to hear the direction given to the chauffeur. The monsieur with the mustache called out, 'To the Restaurant of the Abbaye,' and they drove off in the direction of Montmartre at great speed."

At once I departed for the Abbaye, much encouraged. It seemed to me that three white-haired Americans could not sup at this restaurant without attracting a certain amount of attention, and I was not disappointed. When I had completed my inquiries, I

returned jubilant to the Hotel Splendide, but not before I had passed once more by the Bourse, where, by telephone, I communicated an announcement carefully worded to my good friends, the sporting editors of the daily journals. I had, as you will see, an inspiration of the most fortunate!

"Madame, we are already on the track of Mr. Warren," I cried, bursting into the apartment where the ladies awaited my return. "Last evening, at a late hour, he had supper at the Abbaye in Montmartre, not with one white-haired American, but with two!"

The aunt uttered an exclamation of horror.

"But it is impossible!" she said. "My brother would not dream of entering such a place at any hour."

"I assure you, madame, that I have received of him a description which leaves no room for doubt. Tall, white-haired, with nose curved like an eagle's, piercing black eyes, chin of the bulldog—what could be more definite? I have even now in my possession the actual bill for Monsieur Warren's supper. Here it is! *Homard à la Créole*—"

"Lobster! No, not lobster!" almost shrieked the ladies. I presented the bill to madame in confirmation. Her distress was acute, and the beautiful eyes of Miss Warren were dilated in dismay as she gazed at it over her aunt's shoulder.

"It says lobster!" cried the aunt. "It says lobster for three! Heavens! And what is this? Champagne, cigars—also for three? My poor brother-in-law, with his heart affection it will be his death—for years he has not smoked! Monsieur Lacroix, this is some terrible mistake."

"I fear not, madame," I responded, with sympathetic concern. "The statement of the commissionaire at the door of the Abbaye cannot be shaken. Moreover, he had many opportunities of accurate observation, as I am assured by him that Monsieur Warren remained on the sidewalk for a considerable period, on emerging from the restaurant, where he attracted attention by fighting with his two companions."

The two women gasped in speechless amazement. Madame struggled palpably for breath. Then her jaw set very grimly, and she sat bolt upright and trembled a little with outraged propriety.

"Let me understand you," she said. "My poor brother fought with these men?"

"I am unable to entertain a doubt of it, madame. As I am informed, they present themselves to the commissionaire, all three, the stout man loudly demanding his automobile, Mr. Warren demanding a taxi-auto. 'No, he does not want a taxi,' asserts the stout man. 'He has a delusion. Get me my auto, I tell you!' When the functionary returns from a side street, having summoned the automobile, it is to find Mr. Warren struggling with his companions. 'No, no! I will not go with you!' he repeats. 'It is of the utmost importance that I should return to my hotel!' But the others will not listen. 'Come with us and see life,' they reply to all his protests, and finally the unhappy Monsieur Warren is overpowered, thrust into the powerful auto, and borne away at great speed, uttering hoarse cries. I have a description of the automobile, and it now remains to identify the silver-haired companions of Mr. Warren—the one short, stout, and clean-shaven, the other meager of build, and with a mustache."

"But we know no such people!" cried Miss Warren, turning blankly to her aunt for confirmation. "They are absolute strangers!"

"Nevertheless, the problem does not appear incapable of solution. I will engage at least to demonstrate to-morrow some quite novel possibilities of the aéroplane, and if I fail, there are always the police."

"Monsieur, to rescue my unhappy brother," replied madame sorrowfully, "I would even ascend into the air with you myself!"

Accordingly, on arising next morning, I drove at once to the parade ground of Issy, where I had no sooner arrived than I was surrounded by aviators and

mechanics, in their hands copies of the morning papers, containing my announcement, on their lips insistent questions. I climbed upon the chassis of my monoplane and addressed them.

"My comrades, I can tell you nothing more," I said, "but I beseech you to aid me in the investigation I have proposed in the journals. It is now the hour at which the signals I have invited should begin to appear. It is essential that they should be reported to me at once, so that when messieurs the journalists arrive, ravening with curiosity, I may be far away; for the success of my experiment depends upon discretion. When I tell you that it is undertaken in the service of the beautiful unknown who arrived with me last night by air, need I say more, to aviators and Frenchmen? Aloft then!"

Concluding with a gesture of appeal most spirited, I pursued my comrades to their hangars, whence there proceeded presently the cheering sound of *aéro-motors* and the smoke of their exhausts. In an incredibly short time, three biplanes and two monoplanes were rising in ever-widening circles, until their pilots envisaged the whole of Paris. Anxiously I set myself to prepare my brave *Dragon Fly*. In less than ten minutes a monoplane returned with a report, landing on the parade ground in a cloud of dust. The pilot waved his hand, and skimmed over the earth joyfully toward the hangars.

"Officials are laying out white banners on the roof of the dance hall of the Moulin de la Galette!" he cried, as I ran to meet him with all my legs. "In the yard behind the Rat Mort are tablecloths in the form of a cross. The device marches, is it not so?"

"That remains to be seen," I replied. "Aloft once more, my gallant comrade!"

As he rose again, a biplane swooped down to earth, and landed a passenger, who ran to me and embraced me.

"Montmartre is whitening with signals, my brave Jules," he said. "Down the Boulevard de Clichy I have seen three undeniable crosses made with quilts. The cafés, the restaurants, the

theaters alike display the white cross—your quarry has certainly been making the bomb!"

"Their object, alas, was to see life at its most hectic!" I replied, my own enthusiasm tinged with sadness for the father of my adored. "But tell me, are there no crosses farther out of the city?"

Even as I spoke another monoplane descended, and the passenger sent me a written report by a mechanic. It said:

Direction of Versailles, two white petticoats are crossed in the garden of a peasant. In the yard of an *estaminet* half a mile beyond, tablecloths. A *garde champêtre* in the vicinity has a handkerchief over his head, but this may be to protect his brain from the sun.

"It is enough!" I cried to my mechanician, and in a moment we sprang into our seats, with the good motor roaring. Rising high into the air, as I circled over the Seine, I saw in the clear sunshine dozens of white crosses on the ground, which appeared sporadically toward the river, burst out in patches on the hill of Montmartre, and tailed off in the direction of Versailles.

In truth, it was more easy than a paper chase in the lanes of New England. Clearly indicated by white crosses, some small, others large, was the road along which I might hope to find my mysterious Americans and their captive. As we flew high over Versailles, on the roof of the stables of the palace itself a man with a large brush was daubing white crosses in plain sight!

For half an hour we were never out of sight of them. Then all at once the scent failed. Near Rambouillet we came above the last of the crosses, and I turned the nose of my gallant monoplane to earth and landed in an adjacent field. The cross was made of sheets of the morning newspaper, and displayed on a conservatory behind a wayside residence.

I sent Georges to make inquiries at the house. He returned presently, waving his arms in joy unrestrained.

"Victory!" he shouted. "They are at the Château of Morbec, ten minutes' flight from here."

Immediately we dispatched a peasant with a telegram to Madame Hamilton, at the Hotel Splendide. In my ardor I worded it in the enthusiastic American tongue. I said:

Have the honor to inform you that I have secured prompt lead-pipe cinch on the old man. Hasten then to Château de Morbec.

LACROIX, Pilot Aviator.

Figure to yourself with what a triumphant feeling I finally stopped my engine high above the château, and planed down noiselessly into the beautiful grounds. But it was as nothing to the scene that presented itself to us as, hiding the *Dragon Fly* in a clump of trees, we advanced across the turf to make a reconnaissance.

Down the grassy slope far ahead of us runs a tall old man all by himself, gesticulating as he runs. As he approaches, I draw Georges into the shadow of some trees. That strong, aquiline nose! Those eyes of a hard, black insolence! That chin of the mastiff—it is the unhappy financier! He is shouting "Stung!" repeatedly, and shaking his fist at the heavens.

We precipitate ourselves upon him with loud cries of reassurance, of encouragement. But over the crest of the hill appear two others, both old men, white-haired. They also are shouting, and in their hands are waving sticks.

"It is he!" I cry, and all oily as I am from the lubricant of my motor, I seize Monsieur Warren in my arms and embrace him cordially, while the good Georges performs a somersault of joy on the grass.

"Stung!" cries the financier, almost incoherent with disgust. "And who the devil are you, sir? Stung! Where is the telegraph office?"

"Have no fear, Monsieur Warren," I reply. "Courage! I, Jules Lacroix, will see that you are restored to your friends."

"Friends be damned!" he retorts angrily. "They have swindled me—shamelessly cheated me out of a railway. Take me to the telegraph office, I tell you—I must cable at once!"

The others arrive, panting.

"Really, Warren, it is no use," they

urge. "Will you not listen to reason? We've got you by the short hairs."

I hurl myself upon them.

"Bandits! *Cambrioleurs!*" I cry. "The game is blown up! Stand back, or I will assail you with buffets of the fist. Monsieur Warren's friends have hastened to his aid."

Breathless with their pursuit, they seat themselves upon the grass, glaring. The short, stout one laughs a little.

"All right," he says, "get busy and aid him. But you won't get a cable off this side of to-morrow, and to-morrow's Sunday, anyhow."

"That may be so," I reply, "but I will most assuredly take your prisoner back to Paris."

"How, take me back?" exclaims the aged financier. His two white-haired captors gaze blankly upon each other.

"I have just arrived in my monoplane to search for you, monsieur," I explain. "The machine even now waits for you beyond the trees. As soon as you desire we will depart for the nearest telegraph office!"

"But I don't know you, sir, and I don't want to be discovered. Also, I would not trust myself in your monoplane for twenty railways."

"But, monsieur, I assure you that it is the identical monoplane in which I have just broken the record of height!"

"You may break your neck on it for all I care," angrily replies Monsieur Warren, "but not mine. I would like to have a look at that *aéroplane* of yours—how do we know you have not come after the Morbec plate? And your friend in the rubber jacket seems to me to be hardly right in his head!"

The poor Georges! He was still posed in threatening attitude over the white-haired bandits.

Before I can reply, the unmistakable drone of an aerial motor floats to us on the breeze, and a biplane appears high above the woods behind us. Gazing in astonishment, I see behind it the forms of three more, and then two monoplanes.

My comrades of Issy! The gallant fellows have been unable to retain their impatience. As they near the château,

the air is filled with the vicious whirring of their motors.

"What on earth is it all about?" demands the white-haired man with the mustache, rising to his feet, and shading his eyes in wonder.

"It is the air corps of Issy," I reply, with a superb gesture, "dispatched in search of Monsieur Warren by his sorrowing family!"

"By whom, sir?" demands the aged financier.

"By Madame Hamilton."

He gapes, he trembles—his long, slender legs fail him, and he sinks upon the grass beside the stout man.

"She knows that I am here? Am I never to be left in peace?"

"I do not understand, monsieur. Madame and your daughter were greatly distressed by your absence."

"But who in blazes told my daughter?"

"Madame herself, arriving to find that you were not at the hotel, telegraphed to mademoiselle. I had the honor to carry your daughter to Paris to join madame."

"What, you dare to say that you took my daughter up in your stick-and-string hell kite?"

"Perfectly! Also, I would call monsieur's attention to the fact that I have never yet killed a passenger. Mademoiselle your daughter will herself assure you in the course of an hour that the experience was charming. She is even now on her way here with Madame Hamilton *en auto*."

The three white-haired men exclaimed in disgust. Monsieur Warren turned upon me a look of pained reproach. The others slapped each other on the back and burst into uncontrolled laughter.

"Messieurs, I am a simple aviator," I said, taking off my leather casquette and bowing. "I live in the air, which I understand as well as any man. But on earth there are occasionally things that puzzle me. I find here a disappearance in which no one is missing, a prisoner who is free, a victim of bandits who is on most excellent terms with his cap-

tors. I ask a thousand pardons for my intrusion. What do I know?"

The aged financier smiled grimly.

"If you have brought Mrs. Hamilton after me, you lack a whole lot of being wise," he said. "I came here to avoid her. But it is hopeless, I suppose. I am to be coddled, and dieted, and fussed over for the rest of my days. Oh, you may laugh, my friends," he added, turning upon the others, "but you will do so on the other side of your faces when my sister-in-law arrives."

He arises to scan the heavens, now echoing with the rattle of aeroplanes overhead.

"It seems that we are to have a sort of aviation festival. After all, it is not without its entertaining side. Permit me, monsieur—Lacroix, I think you said? The bandit to the right of you is my ancient enemy, Mr. Louis Oxmeyer, who is president of the United Threshing Machine Trust. The second bandit is my good foe, Grant Haviland, who is president of the International Railroad Tie Trust."

The two white-haired men rose and bowed.

"After decoying me out here," said Mr. Warren, "where I am out of touch with New York, they coolly inform me that they have in the interval secured control of one of my railways. But if you watch the market news you will see Messieurs Oxmeyer and Haviland catch a very chilly draft next month. At the present moment my agents are preparing a surprise for them."

The first monoplane and a small biplane landed together, and the others already circled overhead, preparing to swoop down upon us.

"You say that madame is already on the way?" asked the gentleman called Haviland.

"I fear so," I responded sadly.

"Then we have half an hour of freedom remaining," said Mr. Warren. "I fear it is out of the question to finish our golf game. But I will trouble you for another cigar, Oxmeyer—my last, I fear, for many months to come—and I *think* we may join Monsieur Lacroix and his comrades in a cocktail or so in

celebration of their novel visit. By the way, how did you get on our track?"

I produced from my pocket a cutting from the morning paper.

"This is from the aviation notes of the *Figaro*," I said, "but a similar notice appeared in most of the journals of this morning. I will translate—monsieur understands that the wording is not entirely my own:

The popular, famous, and sympathetic aviator, Jules Lacroix, requests the announcement that he will to-day undertake an experiment in the rapid tracing and capture of fugitives by aeroplane. To this end certain of his friends, three in number, dressed *en Americain* and with silver-white hair, have departed from Paris to an unknown destination in an automobile striped with green and black. It is desired that all friends of aviation observing this auto party will assist our intrepid comrade in his experience so valuable and strongly interesting by exhibiting a white cross in some portion of their premises invisible to the general public, but easily discernible from the sky.

"Monsieur will understand," I added, "that in France every man, woman, and child is a friend of the aviation. Montmartre was positively white with crosses."

"We did rather tear it, you know," said Monsieur Oxmeyer, shaking his head. "I suppose we shall get ours from your womenfolk, Warren!"

And, indeed, it so happened, later in the day. That grim woman of Vermont! A will of iron, I assure you, an energy indomitable, a personality overwhelming! At dinner at the château that evening the toast of "Aviation" was drunk by Monsieur Warren in the purest water, because of his heart weakness, and he cringed in the thickest of woollens next to his skin.

But before they arrived, what touching ceremony, in the library of the château! Standing around in our flying clothes, we raised our glasses to the trio of magnates of finance. Monsieur Warren drank a dry Manhattan cocktail with an olive in it, and lighted his last cigar amid a company breathless, sympathetic, desolated. The emotion was great!

And mademoiselle? To-night I dine with them at the Hotel Splendide. I am appointed to instruct her in aviation at a princely retainer. More than that, her foremost suitor, the Comte de Châlons, glares upon me with envy.

But what do I care? On the earth I am poor Jules Lacroix, former mechanic, and he is of the aristocracy—*homme du monde*. But once in my beautiful *Dragon Fly*, I am veritable prince of the air, and she will be my princess!



APRIL

FASHIONED of tearfulness, tenderness, cheerfulness;

Changeable, shy as the ways of a maid;

Spring's sweetest miracle, lovely and lyrical,

Showers and flowers, and sunshine, and shade.

Making the merry land fragrant as fairy land,

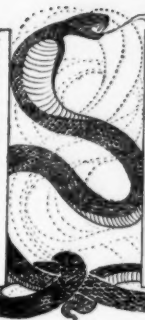
Thrilling the heart with a wonderment new,

Laughing and serious, moonlit, mysterious,

April's a month that was molded for you!

BERTON BRALEY.

The VOICE of the CHARMER *By* E.W. Hornung



OLD Duggan and Charlie Shand had been mates for years, in hut and tent, on foot and horseback, as overseer and storekeeper at the same Queensland station, but latterly as partners on a place of their own in the Lachlan back blocks. Duggan was the better bushman. Charlie Shand had brought in most of the capital. Charlie managed the business, Duggan the sheep and the men, and neither trenched upon the other's province. The partnership might have been made in heaven, and seemed in no danger of being marred on earth; in four years there had been hardly a hot word or a black look between them. Then they had a really good season and Charlie went home to England for a spell.

Old Duggan, who really was not at all old, saw him off with longing eyes, after vowing that nothing would induce him to go home himself, though he also hailed from lesser Britain. If he lied, he was rewarded for his unselfishness. It rained that summer as he had never seen it rain before; and one good season on top of another is a Pelion of pure gold on a merely auriferous Ossa. Duggan saw sovereigns pouring from the sky, and more sovereigns growing where things were not even supposed to grow. Every scrap of normal desert was swallowed by a rank oasis in which sheep could not travel until the jungle of grass had been beaten down in front of them.

Duggan stocked every acre, yet counted the months at first, and then

the days, that must elapse before Charlie Shand's return. Charlie's communications he could have counted on the fingers of one hand; but at last came a cable of two welcome words, and some weeks later a long telegram from Melbourne. This telegram began in the first person plural, and ended with the hour at which Mr. and Mrs. Charles Shand expected to arrive by the coach and hoped to find the shanghai at the township to meet them.

Duggan had to steady himself with a stiffish nobbler. It was the very first that he had heard of the interloping lady. He could only suppose that Charlie had been bewitched on the voyage and married off the reel on landing. Some such marriages turned out a huge success. Charlie was no fool, either; he knew his own mind better than most, wanted only what was worth having, and saw that he got it nearly every time. He would make no mistake in a big thing like this; trust old Charlie to have done a good stroke for himself and for the station. A woman would be the making of the whole place; they had always said so. Still, it was rather a sudden end to old times, rather like rushing the more civilized existence of their common dream. It would have kept a bit longer, Duggan thought on the veranda, where they had threshed out everything of old. And on the last night of his loneliness he felt really lonely for the first time.

But he rose like a bird to the last day; every minute of it went in final preparations for the happy pair. There

was much to be made as shipshape and as snug as possible; sprays of scrub to be stuck about the place by way of flowers; a native turkey to be shot for the evening banquet; champagne to be raised from a next-door neighbor fifteen miles away; furniture to furbish, including a grand piano of great antiquity; and then the bridal quarters to prepare as well as Duggan himself could prepare them in the time. This entailed his own migration to the bachelors' barracks of which they had never as yet made any use. They had run the place between them, those two, without the aid of any of those young gentlemen who hang about most homesteads, and are not worth their parlor rations. It might be as well to import one now, since four was at any rate better company than three. Yet there was no knowing; there were women and women, and Charlie was the very man to pick one in ten thousand. Charlie's friend grew more and more sanguine as the busy day wore on.

He had not time to drive five miles to meet them, even if he had been quite sure it was the tactful thing to do. One of the men went in the shanghai, while Duggan had his hair cut by the Chinaman, trimmed his own beard, and arrayed himself in a snowy suit hastily washed and ironed for the great occasion. It was dark when he stepped down from the veranda, shouting welcomes; but though it was dark, and also dinner time, Duggan saw enough of the bride to require a nobbler with Charlie before they all met properly at the table.

"How long have we been married?" said that sinner, as they touched glasses. "I feel as if it were all my life! So will you, when your time comes, my son; everybody does, if they pick a winner."

"But how long, really?"

"Oh, a few weeks before we sailed."

"Then why on earth didn't you write and tell me?"

Duggan was clearly holding himself in, his voice trembled as it was; but Charlie Shand had his answer pat: "My dear old Harry, I'd have sent a ten-pound cable rather than hurt your

feelings; but, as a matter of fact, we thought we'd spare them. You see, you might have been in the devil's own funk all this time, wondering what she'd be like. You might have imagined she'd go and spoil everything; and now you can see for yourself at a glance that it'll be just the other way about. She's a topper, Harry! It was partly her idea—not to make you anxious."

"I see."

"You're not sick with us?"

"Of course I'm not."

"You never will be, either. I feel twice the chap I ever was, and she's—well, wait till you know her! You wait, old son. I'll give you a week to get to know her; then you won't need me to tell you that she's just about the greatest girl God ever made!"

She was, perhaps, not quite, *quite* a girl at all; otherwise even Duggan could not have caviled at a word the happy idiot had said about his wife. She was a superb woman, as long as she was not too good for the bush. That was the only criticism a stranger might have formulated at the beginning of dinner; by the end, he would probably have seen that she was really too good to be too good for any mere spot on earth. She talked capitally, and all the time to Duggan, to her groom's intense delight.

What was even more delightful, and certainly more surprising, was the way old Duggan chattered in his turn, on newspaper topics which he would simply never have mentioned in the old bachelor days. His solitude seemed to have done him good; it, at any rate, had driven him deep into his *Australian*, and the affairs of the outside world. Men do not really get to know each other by living alone together. It takes a woman to hold them up to one another. Charlie had always known his friend for a great gentleman; but he had never suspected that behind that bearded piece of mahogany there resided a society man as well. He felt deliciously out of it at the festal board. The other two talked away as if they had known each other all their lives. And Charlie only gloated over this final seal on his incredible bliss.

His turn came on the dear old veranda, where he and Duggan had spent so many peaceful evenings in the past; this was worth them all put together, from Charlie's point of view. To him it was a new veranda with a new world of stars outside. He began to babble; the others now seemed glad to listen.

Mabel—for that was her dear name—found piquant enjoyment with a cigarette that showed the tip of her neat nose every few seconds; the men had prime cigars imported by the smuggler Shand. He was rather too full of their merits and his cunning; but there was so much that even he could not say before them both. At last he gave himself an opportunity; she must sing to them to round the evening off. No voice? What about the farewell concert on the ship! Piano out of tune? Well, Mab wouldn't be; they'd never notice the piano when she got going.

"I've hardly ever been in the room since you went away. I shouldn't wonder if some of the strings had perished," said Duggan, still backing up the bride.

Charlie was inclined to be unreasonable. A lamp was carried into the room behind them, where the poor old Broadwood was found primed with French polish, to aggravate its other infirmities. Deft fingers took a hasty trial trip over the neglected keys, while my lord and master stole back in triumph to unresponsive Duggan and his angry cigar.

"Isn't she a topper?" he whispered. "But you wait till you hear her sing!"

And dour old Duggan waited without a word.

"What shall it be?" came from within in reckless tone.

"Anything you like, darling. You can't go wrong. Have you any favorites, Harry?"

"No."

"You used to have, whenever I gave tongue, you old scoundrel!"

"I'm sure I should appreciate anything that Mrs. Shand chose to give us."

Something in his old friend's tone—something new and not friendly—made

Charlie look down sharply. Duggan was seated on the edge of the back veranda, his feet in the heavy sand that had drifted like snow on that side of the house, his eyes on the jet and jewels of trees and stars. Yet up he jumped at the first bar of the bride's first song.

Her groom was more than pacified. His proud eyes followed stealthily Duggan to the lighted room, and left him a silhouetted statue on the threshold:

"As the flight of a river
That flows to the sea,
My heart rushes ever
In tumult to thee!
A twofold existence
I have where thou art—
My heart in the distance
Beats close to thy heart.
Look up! I am near thee,
I gaze on thy face,
I see thee, I hear thee,
I feel thine embrace."

So sang Mrs. Charlie at the old Broadwood grand, trusting to her memory for both words and music. The lamp burned behind her on a table, and behind the lamp stood Duggan, who had not heard one word. His entire being was in his eyes, which were starting out of his head with horror. They did not even see Mabel, her lamp-lit neck, or hair; they were fixed upon a big black snake that her song had charmed out of the piano, that was even now poised to strike, perhaps the very second her song should cease!

And she did not know it, and must not! And her husband lolled contentedly in the veranda, blissfully assured of the effect of her voice on ears that heard not. Only Duggan was there to see and act, to determine how to act before the singing ceased, to stoop and creep on the piano under cover of the singer and her song:

"And absence but brightens
The eyes that I miss,
And custom but heightens
The spell of thy kiss.
It is not from duty,
Though that may be ours;
It is not from beauty,
Though that be bestowed;
But all that I care for,
And all that I know—"

But the "know" ended in a scream, as musician and music stool were sent flying in a heap; and Shand rushed in-doors to find Duggan thrashing the piano with a lash that made dull thuds, and his wife still screaming as if the assault had begun on her. He was picking her up when the seeming madman turned around, and held the dead snake out at arm's length, by the neck, as he had seized it, between finger and thumb. It was nearly five feet long, and black as night, except underneath near his hand, and where the lamplight picked out a red herring-bone pattern at the base of the shining scales.

Hardly a word escaped any of them, as Duggan cast the carcass under the piano, then turned to Charlie and the lamp. Mrs. Charlie watched their backs as she might have watched the snake. Duggan had his knife out, and was doing something that sent his shoulders up to his ears.

"Now something to stop the circulation," she just heard him whisper through his teeth. "Piano string's the thing—have at 'em with my knife!"

His voice was coming back, but the knife had slipped and stuck quivering in the floor. Charlie plucked it up, hurled the piano lid off its hinges, and hacked at the strings till they went off like little rifles, and stung him in the face. But it was Duggan whom the bride was obliged to watch; he was letting something trickle on the floor, and at the same time puffing at his cigar. It had not gone out, wherever he had had it all this time; it glowed again as he puffed and blew at it like a smith at his forge. When it was so red that tiny sparks began to fly, he raised a red wrist to meet it, and the watcher fled.

At the back of the veranda there was one of those reclining deck chairs with a socket for a tumbler at your elbow; it had not been in use that evening, but Mrs. Charlie was thankful to drop into it now. She put up her feet and was no longer fully aware of what was happening. She heard steps and voices, but only those of her husband and his friend. So, perhaps, the worst was over—there had been marvelously little

fuss. Now they seemed to have gone into an inner room; or could they have come out that way without her seeing or hearing them? She sat up, suddenly herself and a woman who had made a fool of herself in the hour of need. The veranda shook under a jangling stride, and Charlie stood over her in his spurs.

"Here you are, little girl! It's going to be all right—feel able to lend a hand?"

"Oh, if I may! I've disgraced you, Charlie. Do tell me what I can do."

"Keep an eye on him. That's about all. Keep him going—amused—talking, if he will! Don't mind if he gets a bit tight; it's the best thing that can possibly happen. He might have that long chair, but don't let him fall asleep."

"And you, Charlie, where are you going?"

"To the township for permanganate of potash, and one or two other things we haven't got. I shan't be much more than an hour."

"You must go yourself?"

"Yes. I know what to get, and time's an object. Besides, Duggan doesn't want them to near of it at the men's hut; he's frightfully set on that, and one must humor him."

"But, Charlie, you said he was going to be all right?"

"So he is, I honestly believe, especially with you to keep him up. You might almost sing to him, darling; he was struck of a heap by your voice! You're the one to save his life."

"I ought to be." Her brave voice shook. "He saved mine, didn't he? We can save him between us, can't we, Charlie? Oh, do tell me that we can!"

He told her that they could, and would, if he got off at once—the next she heard was the hoofs of the night horse thundering into space. She lifted her hands to the winking stars, and prayed on her feet as she had never prayed kneeling down. And before her prayer was finished, a forced laugh made her turn.

Duggan was back in the lighted doorway, still steady as a rock, only facing

outward this time, and with his right hand merely thrust out of sight between the buttons of his duck jacket. The hand seemed to take up a deal of room, and the sleeve looked tight. That was all she could see of the swelling, and the ligatures were out of sight. In his other hand he held a tall tumbler, very full and yellow with the light of the room striking through the liquor. It even cast its yellow double on the dusty boards at Mrs. Charlie's feet; but both substance and shadow were thus far as steady as the statuesque man himself.

"Poor old Charlie!" he chuckled, as the hoofs ceased throbbing, like the last beats of a pulse.

"Why 'poor'?" she cried hoarsely.

"He's such a new chum still! That wasn't a black snake at all. It was a diamond snake—nonpoisonous!"

"Then what were you doing to your hand—with your knife—with your cigar?"

"Oh, well, there's nothing like being on the safe side." He was coming up to her, very slowly, without spilling a drop from his brimming glass. "In any case it was worth it," and he smiled, "for an hour of you all to myself! I shall clear out to-night, you see, or at latest in the morning."

She had forced herself to stand and face him. But her eyes had fallen until the blood all down his ducks arrested them.

"Don't tell me that you deliberately tortured yourself——"

"I didn't. Torture! You can only feel a certain amount. I'd had all I could feel before you started singing." He swayed unexpectedly. "But I was a fool to lose so much blood. D'you mind coming over here?"

He almost staggered to the long chair at the back of the veranda; and the young wife, following automatically, drew a very deep breath. This was only what Charlie had prepared her for; no doubt he had forced quantities of spirit upon Duggan, who, for the reason given with such effrontery, could not very well refuse it. But that reason! It pulled her up, bitterly embarrassed and abased. Then she saw her

old friend—for he was that—place his bumper in the wicker socket, still without a spill, and then lower himself into the chair with a sigh of simple weariness. That sigh took her to him.

"It was a dirty trick, I know," he said. "Can you forgive me for it, Mabel?"

"If you're sure it was a trick."

"I'm afraid there's no mistake about that. It was one thing on top of another, that's what did it. That infernal snake—just then—it was enough to make one lose one's head."

"You saved my life first, Harry!"

"Not your life. The brute wasn't poisonous, I tell you; but it might have given you an ugly nip for all that, to say nothing of the fright, and its beastly body round your neck."

"To think that I never saw it!"

"The funny thing is that it didn't deaden the notes."

"It must have been lying on the long bass strings."

"The piano must have been left open after polishing. That's when it would get in."

So they made talk about the concrete climax of events less easy to discuss. Had she never heard of the notorious partiality of snakes for music? No; how interesting! They might have been sitting out at a dance and trying to get to know each other. But Duggan was lying down, and lying none too still in the treacherous wickerwork. It was as if he was enduring bodily twinges. He was out of the lamplight, however, which came from the room in a clear-cut beam, and illumined Mrs. Charlie when she leaned back in the chair beside him.

"Are you sure there's nothing I can get you?"

"Certain, thanks very much. I'm all right. I only think I may have touched a vein or something."

"But that's dreadful, Harry!"

"Not with piano-wire ligatures. Old Charlie twisted 'em with the pliers; we'd better leave 'em till he comes back, then I'll be as right as the mail."

"You're not touching your drink!"

"It's not necessary, don't you see?"

You keep fidgeting about what I went and did. But if it makes you happy, and you'll join me, I wouldn't mind one of those cigarettes of yours."

She gave him one, and tried to hold the match; he was quick to take it from her in his steadier hand. But in the match light their eyes met, and his looked big with trouble; their hands touched, and his were cold.

"Why didn't you let Charlie write and tell me he had married you?" said Duggan simply, as he smoked.

"I didn't want to part you, if I could help it."

"I see. Well, I'm going all the same."

"He knows absolutely nothing, Harry!"

"But he will have to know. It's nothing shameful, after all. You chucked me; you've done better. That happens every day. But the trio don't live together."

He laughed ironically to himself. But she had heard him only up to a certain point.

"I chucked you?" she cried.

"I'm sorry I put it in such a beastly way. I'm sorry I said it at all."

"Because you know it isn't true!"

"What?"

"When you came out here, and never wrote a single word!"

Her bosom labored, but not with the passion that had long been dead there; her voice broke, but only with undying indignation. That was the one emotion he might still call to life in her—a reflex spasm of humiliating pain, long past, yet never to be forgotten, and the sharper for his callous bearing about it all. But this was modified, for the moment, by the way he passed his hand across his forehead, as if it ached.

"I believe there's been some big mistake," he said wearily. "Don't let's bother about it now! It's too late; and I didn't get you to myself to rake up the past, at least not that part of it. It's true I didn't write for ages. I was so long in making a fair start. I think we'd better leave it at that, if you don't mind."

"But I do mind!" she burst out. "I'm

not thinking of your explanation, but of mine. I haven't come out just to hurt you and have my revenge. I never knew about you until—until Charlie and I—"

"I know. I know," he soothed her, reaching for her hand. He held it only a second. "These flukes—these meetings—of course they aren't really flukes at all—they're our fate. Thank God you did meet! You couldn't help loving him, or he you."

"He was the first," she whispered, "the very first I ever thought of again—after all those years without a word. I nearly broke it off when I did find out. Yet why should I? I had no reason to suppose you would mind. Charlie was quite certain you had never been in love in your life!"

"So my letter did go astray!" This more to himself than her. "I often wondered if it had; but I never had the spirit to write again. It didn't seem quite the game. The whole point was to leave you absolutely free. I promised your people that. They were never keen about me—Mab!"

"Yes, Harry?"

"You're leaning too far forward. I like you near me, but just now I can't see your face in the light from the door."

"It's not fit to be seen."

"Never mind. It's my last chance. I really am going, you know. And I did want to buck about old times!"

"Buck away," she whispered. But she still leaned forward. And that request was not rewarded.

"What about the old place? How was it looking when you came away?"

"You mean ours? We haven't lived there for ages, Harry."

"I'm sorry. Just live there again for a minute, and let me come and see you. There!" She knew that he had closed his eyes. "Have I come to take you on the pond? I say, look out across those stepping-stones! You'd better let me give you a hand." He held his good one out, and she took it without thinking. "That's better, kiddie!" and they both laughed at the absurd name for her now. "Or is it a dance, and we

are sitting out in the rockery? If so, we may get into another row, by Jove!"

"It's not a dance, Harry—" she whispered.

"I'm not so sure. Do you remember those colored lights they played on the rockery fountain on state occasions? Emerald, and pink, and lavender; I can see 'em now. I remember the night I found out how it was done, through that trapdoor hidden in the ferns. That was only at a kid's party, Mab, but if it's going to upset you—"

"It's all right, I'm all right," she answered, drawing at a black cigarette. His had not gone out; he lent it to her, and then sipped his whisky for the first time. At once she remembered Charlie's injunctions, but forgot Duggan's cynical confession, and urged him to drink more.

"Not another drop," he said, spilling a quantity as if on purpose. "I've had far too much as it is; otherwise I shouldn't have upset you by talking a whole lot of rot."

He closed his eyes again—and now it was that terror came upon her. He was fast asleep in an instant. It was the very thing she had been charged to prevent. Was it the whisky, or was it, could it be, to *her* that he had lied? She shook him violently by the shoulder; and his eyes opened within a few inches of hers, opened in paradise judging from their smile.

"What is it, darling? You don't mean to say I dropped off when sitting out?"

His horror was horrible as he tried to sit up and failed.

"Of course not, Harry, dear. Don't you know where you are?"

"Rather—think I did—those lights!"

She turned round to look, her heart leaping at the thought of succor, company, anybody to share the strain. And all she saw was a frameful of twinkling stars and inky scrub between the posts and lintel of a bush veranda. Never, to be sure, were stars more brilliantly alive or in closer cluster. But those were the only lights.

"Now it's emerald—no! Now it's

changed to lavender, and in another minute it'll be pink. Fairyland, I call it—yet your 'under gardener does it with a bit of colored glass and a bull's-eye lantern, somehow up there in the ferns—I say, Mabel—Mrs. Shand!"

"Dear Harry, I'm so thankful!"

"Why? Have I been talking some more rot? I'm awfully sorry, Mrs. Sh—"

"Don't! I can't bear you to call me that!"

"Well, but I ought to, oughtn't I? It's no use telling Charlie now."

"You mustn't go, Harry; you needn't go, I'm sure you needn't!"

He laughed funnily. "I believe I should have given the show away over that song, if it hadn't been for our friend the blacky."

"The what?"

"That diamond snake. No harm in 'em, bless you, but good judges of music. I say, Mab!"

"Yes, Harry?"

"What on earth did you go and sing *that* for?"

"Don't ask me. I—I don't know."

"Funny thing is, I didn't hear a word of it at the time. But now I do, every syllable. You'd got as far as 'all that I care for and all that I know.' If I'd let you finish, the beast might have struck. Ran it rather fine, didn't I?"

"You were splendid, magnificent!"

"I keep on telling you there was no real danger."

"It wouldn't have made any difference if there had been."

"Yet I was cheated out of the end; rather hard, that, wasn't it? I wish you'd give it to me now, Mab!"

"I couldn't, Harry."

"You could!"

And he hummed, in labored whispers:

"But all that I care for—
And all that I know—
Is that without wherefore
I worship thee so!

"Which is absurd," concluded Duggan, out of breath. "I mean—last line but one. I'd like to hear it, all same—if it doesn't bore—if anything could rouse—that's it, *that's it!*"

And Charlie Shand, returning from the township at the nearest approach to a gallop that he could get out of the station night horse, had the same thing running in his head all the way, to a muffled accompaniment of unshod hoofs on a sandy track. But in the home paddock all that changed into the very voice of his charmer, charming never so wisely in the very song so sensationally interrupted an hour before. It augured well that this time it was sung to a finish. Yet Charlie

neither drew rein nor spared spur in his relief, and was only a few lengths nearer home when the voice rang out again—but not in song—

Charlie Shand leaped from the saddle in the station yard, caught up a lamp in his wild rush through the house, and held it on high in the back veranda till the chimney cracked and tinkled at his feet. The naked flame lit up the bowed form of his wife—beside the long deck chair—kneeling over the dead who had died in her arms.



MY DREAM SWEETHEART

NO mortal eyes but mine have seen
 The misty beauty of your face,
 Nor vulgar gaze defiled the sheen
 That half conceals your witching grace.
 You come at night to walk with me
 Upon the misty Dreamland shore;
 You lead me on where none can see,
 Behind Sleep's barricaded door;

And there such tales of love we tell
 As waking lovers never told,
 And Night and Passion weave their spell,
 And all Love's dross is turned to gold!
 They tell me you are but a dream—
 A passing vapor of the mind,
 But, sweetheart, dear, the garish beam
 Of sordid day has made them blind—

Blind to the beauty and the sweet
 And subtle glory of the ray
 That lights the soul where lovers meet
 Behind the curtains of the Day.
 Ah! love, you're but a dream, they say,
 And yet, if even that be true,
 Oh, let them take all else away
 And leave me my sweet dream and you!

WILL LISENBEE.

HIS NEW DAY



BY
HELEN
BAKER
PARKER

BILLY leaned back in his chair, slid sullenly down on the middle of his spine, and refused utterly to eat his beefsteak, although his father asserted that it was juicy and nourishing, and that, moreover, a little boy never would grow up to be a big, strong man if he didn't eat what he should. The Problem apparently did not wish to be a big, strong man.

"I don't like it!" he explained, with finality, through pouting lips.

His father looked at him helplessly. How had Elsie persuaded him to eat the things he should eat? By what mysterious alchemy had she kept so sweet the little boy's disposition? In the old days he had been nicknamed Billy the Blest, so great a joy had it been to him—the big, round world of people and things; and now, after only two years, the question of managing him loomed large and threatening. Arnold Halloway pushed back his uneaten food, somehow suddenly bitter, and looked yearningly at the child, who, with his yellow hair, his big blue-gray, questioning eyes fringed by long black lashes, was a constant reminder of Her. The little boy met his father's gaze, and pounded exasperatingly with a fork on his Haviland plate. They were both thinking of Her, for Elsie still returned as the forever absent do.

The great stone house was full of everything that money could buy, but money couldn't buy her back any more than it had been able to keep her, and

it couldn't buy peace and contentment. For such life had been at her touch, the touch of a necromancer under whose white little fingers lay magic.

The man looked wonderingly at the little boy, and laid a hand on his shoulder. But it was not the clinging, tightening hold her tiny fingers used to have, and, with the relentlessly accurate memory of childhood, Billy compared this hour with many others, with one especially. He could remember the white room, the roses in the big green bowl—father was always bringing Her roses every Saturday night, and every night after she went upstairs and didn't come down any more. He could remember the white curtains blowing, the white bed, and the little white mound under the spread, and the two long braids of shining yellow hair—and how tight her arms were around him when she said: "*Be good, Billy! Oh, you will be good—always—*"

His smarting eyes filled suddenly, and a lump came in his throat when his father said: "Be a good boy to-day, Billy—be a good boy." Billy nodded blindly.

"You're getting on well at school? You're going to pass all right, aren't you?"

"Can't get numbers. Never could."

"Son, son, why didn't you remind me! I must help you to-night—"

"This is the last day o' school, and I betcha I don't pass!" That Billy did not tell his father that he had been kept after school every night for the last

two weeks to solve the problems, primitive and ultimate, of addition and subtraction, was but another proof of the widening chasm.

"I'm sorry I forgot. I don't think of things I ought to—and there is so much that I don't know at all. I wish—I wish you had a grandmother!" The man looked nervously at his watch. "I have to be at the office, and you are alone so much of the time—Do you want to go to Aunt Bertha's for a long while this summer?"

"What makes her so fat—and funny? She weighs a hundred 'n' sixty. She told me so. Without any shoes on!"

"She can't help it, dear. People can't help the way they look. She's lovely, though; her heart is beautiful."

"I can't see through her fat."

"No, no, Billy. But sometimes when we least expect it we—we get a glimpse. When you are older you will understand. You can go this vacation if you want to. I would miss you, but I do want you to grow up to be a fine, good man, Billy."

Billy lingered after his father had gone to the office. Billy's days were all alike. He walked lonesomely around the big dining room, poked an harassing finger at the bird, pulled the cat's tail, and knocked over a chair. He had the grace to frown when he saw the scratch on the polished wainscoting, but the eyes he lifted to the housekeeper's as she warned him of school time were not humble eyes. He was thinking, down deep under all his other thoughts, of "a stepmother."

He had been hearing about her indirectly of late at his aunts'. They had been unusually lenient regarding cookies and doughnuts, and they had given him without mental reservation the freedom of the house. Moreover, they no longer looked to see if he had left off part of his underwear in obedience to instinct.

"Yes," Aunt Bertha had said on one of Billy's recent visits—Billy was cutting a whistle just without the door—"Arnold will bring a new wife home—and Billy's going to be a problem! I pity her, too. Billy's getting worse

every day. He's forgotten Elsie; he never talks about her any more; but just the same he'll give whoever takes her place an awful time! He'll be hard for a stepmother to manage."

Billy was thinking of the "stepmother" now, thinking of the awful time he would give her. Still pondering, he sauntered to school, where he had long since acquired the title of "holy terror," and, at fifteen minutes after nine, scuffed to his seat.

Teacher—her name was Miss van Adelthorpe, and she was not overinsistent upon the omission of the ancient and honored epithet of "teacher"—smiled a last-day-of-school welcome to the last pupil as he made his noisy advent. All were at attention, the attitude assumed with such easy piety on the second Monday in September, and reverted to with an "I-can-stand-it-once-more" expression on the last day of school. Since every one else was at attention, it was but natural that Billy should decide to take the books out of his desk. Their status quo had been accomplished the afternoon before by the ingenious insertion of a half-full ink bottle under the book that seemed to be the key to the situation; and now, the prop falling in a black Niagara, the dog-eared books descended in a noisy cascade to the floor.

"We're at attention now," reminded teacher; and certainly every eye was giving to the Holy Terror the rapt attention of a devotee.

The forenoon dragged by with the morning song and its startling announcement that vacation days had come again, the uplifting selection, the exercises—all the program of the last day when the die is cast and nothing you may do or say, no amount of angelic deportment, no acrobatic display of promptitude when teacher drops her pencil, can change the leopard's spots, the little, round zero, void that spells failure from the time it is writ only on the stony tablet of teacher's heart until the grinning, calculus professor writes it in his little red book, with the conditioning finger of fate.

The second grade went home to

lunch. It appeared that it must come back in the afternoon for its cards—just why is not known, unless that the prophecies of the school board might be fulfilled.

The second grade came back, its eyes on a pile of cards that lay on teacher's desk, back of the ink bottle and her handkerchief with the tiny hem and the "V" in the corner. They went through another ordeal of attention, and sang more songs. Several scientific souls went up to tell teacher that they wished she could have the next grade the next year *if they passed*, but of course if they *didn't* pass they would have her still; but their roving eyes ascertained only that George Henry Smith had passed into the great beyond with third grade over the door.

The girls wore light dresses, white bows in their hair, and white stockings because it was the last day of school; and such as had remembered not to scratch their ankles with their heels were still passing clean as the fateful hour approached. Teacher also was in gala attire, something pale green, filmy, cloudlike, that made her look like spring coming down in the meadow. Her hair was like sunshine—and that was strange, too, for always on profane school days previous it had seemed red—plain red. They had called it red without qualm of conscience, and had shouted at recess time with shrieks of laughter at the originality of their wit:

"Redhead! Redhead!
Fire on the woodshed!"

All save Billy. Whatever his lapses into barbarism, he had never made fun of teacher's hair.

As they looked at her now, the wind blowing the pale green and lace of her dress, they were suddenly sober, and the more sentimental had lumps in their throats in vain regrets for days when they had imperfectly visualized the ideal. She wasn't so bad, after all! Why, she was pretty!

"Aw, gee!" muttered Billy as he gouged a valley out of the edge of his desk. "When'll we let out?"

At last it was over. Somewhere in the vast mystery of the seat of learning a bell rang, and teacher distributed the cards. Passing Billy's desk, she stooped and said in a low voice: "I should like to speak to you for a moment afterward, William." Those nearest tittered, and Billy sank down on the curved bow of his ambiguous spine, and arranged his facial members in what his admirers considered the last cry in wit and humor.

The last confiscated property was disinterred from teacher's desk and restored to the erstwhile owner—sticks of candy, desucked of their barber-shop advertisements, bladeless knives, bits of tinsel string—all the nameless, unclassified tools with which very young men carve out their future. The last note of the last recessional march sounded on the piano in the hall. The last run-over heel pounded down the stairs and out through the only open door included in the philosophy of the second grade, and silence settled, dust and chalk-laden, in the big stone school-house.

The clock on the wall ticked as your heart ticks when you are afraid—louder than anything in the world. A century or two went by while Billy scratched his leg and looked out of the window at the spire of the Methodist church. When he had climbed to the top of that, he began on the big globe in the corner of the schoolroom—it is very important that you learn when you are seven years old that the heathen live on the other side of the world. Billy journeyed across the Desert of Sahara, which made him moisten his lips and look for an oasis in the region of the water faucet; and just as he was coming out of the mouth of the Nile teacher said: "Come here, Billy!" Billy! Just Billy! That was queer, for on the records, between two red lines, it said "William Arnold Howard Holloway," said it way over into the place where it ought to say that he was seven, that he was vaccinated, and that he lived at sixteen Harmon Place.

Billy came, keeping up his courage by pulling down the elastic of his

blouse, in a stylish hobble effect, below his hips. He had a devil-may-care tilt to his head, which, when one is seven, means that the big world in which a single little soul wanders lonesomely is coming to an end. Teacher pushed a red card to the edge of her desk, propped her round elbows near it, leaned her pink-and-white face on her pink-and-white interlocked fingers, and looked at Billy. Billy looked at the card—looked, blinked incredulous eyes.

"Sure? Honest true?" he said, skeptical, and then, forgetting altogether the imminence of erudition: "Cross your heart?"

"Sure, honest true, cross my heart, and—hope to die!"

"I passed!"

"You did."

"I passed! Teacher, I passed!"

He examined the card more thoroughly, trying to solve the riddle.

"Rithmetic, too?"

"Rithmetic, too."

"I guess it was staying after school that did it."

"We did it together, didn't we, you and I?"

He looked at her, and something deep down below the part of him that threw spitballs responded to the spring-meadow green of her gown, the roses of her cheeks, and the sunlight of her hair. He smiled shyly. Teacher smiled, too, shyly, above her locked fingers. The sole of one shoe industriously scraping the patent leather off the other, he leaned on the desk, supporting his head with a hand whose pointed finger sought constantly the cherished cavern where had been a tooth. He looked at her hand.

"My mother had one o' them sparkle rings—only a little bigger, I guess."

"Yes?" said teacher.

He leaned closer. She reached out a hand, but clasped it again with the other, in respect to an old legend that little boys don't want to be touched. They looked into each other's eyes—both deep, both full of unanswered questions.

"I guess I gotto go home," he said at last, with a little sigh.

"They—will miss you?"

"No; Mis' Ames, she——" Billy paused, but not for long; he could always fall back upon his memory, where was stored much information. "She ain't paid to dis'plin' me, an' father's to the office. He keeps bulls and bears there, but ain't a zoo."

He kept looking into teacher's eyes. "Hers were blue," he said.

It appeared that teacher wanted to know all about Her and how She looked.

"She had," said Billy, "goldy hair like you, and eyes that looked like yours, only different color; hands like you, and—but I never cry—just sometimes when I wake up in the night and She isn't there."

And then, before he knew it, he was in her arms, her warm, tight, clinging arms, and two tears were glistening on his lashes, and he was telling her all, all about it. And all the while teacher held him tightly, and his arm was about her neck, and his head leaned in the hollow of her shoulder. It had been two years since he had felt what he felt now, and he sat very still lest the blessed spell be broken—for it might never happen again.

As they sat thus there were long, pleasant silences between low-spoken confidences as he told her about his mother—the snow-white dresses she wore, what she gave him to eat, and what she didn't give him—sweet things that are made to look so awful good, but that ferment; and she knew about the place in his body they didn't agree with—it wasn't his stomach—no, his disposition. He told teacher what she read to him nights before she tucked him in, put the shade up so he could see the birds going to bed, and put out the light—"The Little Tin Soldier," and "Child's Garden o' Verses," and the best story of all, that wasn't written in a book, about The Place Where I Lived When I Was a Little Girl.

"I'm going to have a stepmother," Billy remembered aloud mournfully.

"Oh, tell me about her!"

"I'm going to give her an awful

time," Billy dragged up out of his subconscious mind.

"Oh, now, that would be a shame! What—what are you going to do?"

Billy scowled and meditated. What were those awful things his aunts had said he would do? He really could not think.

Teacher held him very tightly, and wiped his eyes with the handkerchief with the tiny edge and the "V" in the corner. It was very cool on his face, and somehow the touch of it and the way she did it made the tears come out of his eyes almost as fast as she wiped them away. But after a while she said: "There, now, let's see you smile!" And when the handkerchief was out of the way he looked out between his shining lashes, and demanded: "What you crying for?"

"Because you cry, dear," said teacher. "You see, I lost mine, too—I don't even remember her; but I have cried in the night."

Teacher's face was very near to his—and she kissed him. His lips met hers, trembling, clinging. They sat very still in each other's arms while the patch of sunlight moved farther and farther along the floor and faded, and a little breeze blew the muslin curtains into the room.

After a while teacher put on her hat—a big white hat, with big white plumes that stirred like white clouds—and all the while she was smiling down at him, and he was smiling up at her.

"I wish," said Billy, "I wish——"

"Yes? What do you wish, dear?"

"I wish my father had gone to school to you——"

Teacher laughed gayly, and took a little looking-glass in her hand, and did something to her chin with a little, round, yellow cloth. "But you see, Billy, I'm not so old as that."

"No, I know it. My father's awful old. He's got white hair and railroad tracks in his forehead—but," loyally, "he's got a nice gold tooth!"

"And you think—it would be nice if he had gone to school to me——"

"Yes. But—it's too late now. I

guess she's coming soon—the new one is——"

Hand in hand, they went down the darkening hall and out into the street.

"You know my Aunt Bertha?" asked Billy. "She's awful fat, but she's got a beautiful heart. You can't see it through her fat, but you'll understand when you're older. Maybe you'll get a—a glimpse. Did you ever get a glimpse?" Teacher had occasionally had a glimpse.

"You go a piece with me," begged Billy. "She used to walk here with me."

They went along under the low-hanging elms. The shadows were getting longer on the grass, and here and there some one was cooking an early supper. Teacher held his hand very loosely, in respect to the old legend, so that he could take it away if he chose; but when they passed the Hudson twins and he clung proudly to her hand, turning the sparkle ring on her finger, she returned the pressure; and so they came to the vine-covered arch and looked through the hedge into the beautiful garden beyond which stood the great stone house.

"Come in!" urged Billy. "Into the garden. There's a seat, and I'll pick you some daisies. I'll pick all there is——"

"Oh, don't pick them! I'll just—I'll just look at them."

Hand in hand, they came into the garden, and sat down on the marble seat. There was a fountain near, and birds were taking their evening bath.

Billy pointed to a row of open windows in an upper room. "They're dekrating those rooms for——"

"See, Billy," said teacher, "see the birds in the fountain!"

"Would—would you like to stay in this garden always instead of be teacher?"

"It is a truly beautiful garden——"

"You think if you wouldn't like to—I think——"

And while they were thinking there was a shadow on the walk.

"Oh, father," said Billy, in some em-

barrassment, for his mind was full of treason, "this is teacher; she's just resting in the garden, and I passed! She'll go pretty soon, but she likes the garden."

Teacher and father smiled at each other, and the pink in her cheeks was pinker, and some of the light that Billy had not seen for many a day was in father's eyes. He laid a tissue-paper cornucopia in teacher's lap, and she opened it, burying her face in the fragrance.

"You told him?" whispered father; and teacher, looking at the birds in the fountain, whispered back: "No; I wanted him first to learn to—"

Billy leaned his head against the hollow in her shoulder and looked into her face. Teacher was like spring, when

the wind blows the new grass in the meadow, and white clouds float in the sunshine. And then, when the shadows got longer and longer, and the sun dropped down behind the lilac bush, and the little night breeze began to blow, she was like the morning of a new day.

"Teacher!" His voice was full of glad wonder. "You're the new—the new—my new—"

"Yes, yes, Billy—"

"And you won't be the other boys' teacher at all?"

"No."

"But just—my—my—"

"Just that, dear."

And as they clung to each other he drew her face close to his, and whispered The Wonderful Name.



YSEULT

FAREWELL, and God be with you, love; and yet—

I do not really part from you—ah, no!

You shall not ever utterly forget,

But feel me with you still where'er you go.

So shall you pay a thousand times my debt,

Recalling that which only you can know.

I will encompass you with dreams in spring,

I will be April's self, all green and blue,

I will be June, with roses burgening,

I will be leaf, and flower, and fruitage, too;

There shall not be one single vivid thing

But brings the shadow of me back to you.

And in high moments, when with joy and fear

Great passions tear the very skies apart

To plant new stars, I shall be very near;

For this is mine—my sole, unchallenged part:

Though others hear—or press—your lips, my dear,

It will be I who hearken to your heart.

A. A. C.

The Woman Who Was Born A Lover



SOME of us were bor-rn for one thing, some for another, and the rest of us for nothing at all," said Chief Engineer Mickey O'Rourke, of *Lightship No. 188*. "'Tis the blood in our veins and the breath in our throats that makes us what we are. Mary Flanagan was bor-rn a lover."

There was a moment's silence at the tilting table in the little saloon. Captain Rasmussen drummed with his spoon on the heavy coffee mug that sidled uneasily to the swing of the plunging ship, and the mate carefully filled his pipe. The name of Mary Flanagan had not been pronounced on a lightship in five years. Mickey's gray mustache bristled and his bright eyes swept us all with a peculiar glance.

"Yes," he repeated, "Mary Flanagan was bor-rn a lover. Ye say nothing, for ye raymimber that—that day."

Rasmussen's steady gaze rested on his chief engineer in silent warning.

"I am the oldest in the service, misther," Mickey returned quietly, "and I knew Mary Flanagan since the day whin she was a bit of girl wid a thor-rn in her pretty knee, and sat crying on a green hill above the smoke from me father's cabin."

"'And what is the matther, me bould lass?' I asks her, swinging me pack down from me shouldher—I was bound to sea again."

"'The bell at the church rang and I knelt for a prayer,' says little Mary."

"'And ye knelt on a thor-rn?' says I."

"'I will niver kneel again,' says the mite, her brown eyes flashing. And she niver did—but once. 'Tis thrue. For twenty years, Mary Flanagan niver knelt, and at the last—'twas on the thor-rn of the wild rose in her heart."

The mate puffed slowly on his pipe and nodded gravely. The chief engineer went on:

"Whin I came back from sea two years later—'twas after the wreck of the ould *City of Brussels*—Heaven rest the weary bones of her!—Mary met me on the hill. I stopped and stared at her, for she was grown into a fine girl, wid hair that slanted in the wind like rain, and the bosom of a woman. She saw the look in me eyes and danced a step on the green, holding her short frock above her knees."

"'And 'tis our bould Mickey back from the seas,' says she."

"The heart of me danced to her foot-ing, and I spoke quickly. 'I am back wid gold and silver in me purse,' says I."

"She shook her head. 'I dance for nayther,' she whispered."

"'And for what do ye dance?' I whispered back."

"I saw the eyes of her bur-rn behind the long lashes like a flame behind a bush. Then she bent her head till I saw no more."

"'For what do ye dance, ye sprite?' I demands."

"'For love!' says she, laughing at me seriousness."

"'Thin ye're stepping it day and night,' I replics."

"She tossed her head. 'I dance only for meself now,' says the slip of a girl.

"Are there no men left?' I demands.

"None worth me while,' she returns haughtily.

"Ye'd better pray for a humble heart,' says me bould Mickey.

"Pray?' says she, in scorn. 'The last time I knelt I got a thor-rrn in me knee.'

"I raymimber,' says I. And we stood and stared at each other a moment, and she slipped away from me and was gone.

"Twas three years later that once more I wint down the ould green and saw Mary dreaming, her chin on her knees, while the morning sun rose and the breeze blew from hill to hill. She did not look up nor speak. Farther down I met black Tim Sullivan coming up, and be the look of him, I knew that he was going to Mary. I stopped him. 'And how is your wife, Tim?' I asks him bouldly.

"She is blowing the fire on the hearth,' he responds. 'Stop in and pass the time wid her.'

"So I wint on and came to the door, and saw Ellen by the hearth, and the eyes of her were black from tears.

"Did ye see—*thim*?' she demands.

"Why pertend not to see sorra when it calls to ye? I said nothing, but nodded me head.

"Why does he go to her?' she wint on, wringing her worn hands.

"What should I say? I wint on.

"That evening there was a rag of moon in the sky showing betwixt the storm clouds, and I walked up the path to breathe the good air that blew across the hills—the air widout salt or bitterness. On the path Mary Flanagan met me.

"For why are yez abroad this night, Mickey?' says she.

"I did not know till now,' I responds.

"She considered me a long time. I saw that she had no need to pray—heavenly saints forgive me for the sin of saying it!—for she was a prayer herself—and the answer! I trembled and spoke quickly: 'Will ye dance for me?'

"Again she considered me, her eyes shining in the dusk, and her hair slanting in the wind. At last she said: 'Is there no other?'

"Then I raymimbered and said nothing. She laughed. 'Is there always another? Am I niver to find the man fit to be me lover?'

"Tim Sullivan?' I suggested, the devil rising in me.

"There is another sits by his fire this night,' she returned.

"Have ye been to confession?' I demands.

"I go to no confession at all, at all,' she remarks, sitting down. 'Whin I confess, 'twill be to me man alone.' And she spoke freely to me in the darkness and told me of her longing, and opened the heart of her, so that I saw she was bor-rrn a lover. At the end she cried on me shouldher for lonesomeness, and because she did that, I knew that she would niver look at me wid a woman's eyes. So I left.

"Twas many years after in Astoria that nixt I saw her. She was walking along the street, wid the pride in her face and the light in her eyes. And I forgot the wooden streets and the wash of the river under the spiles, and the smell of the nets on the racks, and stopped before her.

"'Tis Mary Flanagan still,' I says.

"'Tis I, Mickey O'Rourke,' she replies.

"I see that ye have found no thor-rns yet,' I says bouldly.

"Thin she laughed and pouted at me. 'Are there no men at all in the wor-ld?' she demands.

"Twas a question, and I stood on one foot, and looked at her, and thought. And there were none. I passed on. What are such as we to look on the woman that was bor-rrn a lover?

"Thin, as ye know, I wint out on ould No. 153 wid that tarrier among skippers, Marten the Dane. And we lay and tossed in the seas off the bar for two years in that ould packet, and in all that time Marten niver wint ashore, but chewed his great beard, and strode the deck in silence. At the end

of the two years, we were ordered in for docking and repairs. The first night ashore I met Mary Flanagan. She was younger than ever, and her eyes shone whin she saw me.

"Have ye found a man?" I asked her, looking into the fire behind her dark lashes and the flame on her smooth cheeks.

"I have not," says she. "But I will find him. The men I see, Mickey, have ever another picture in their hearts. 'Tis the glint of a strange fire on a woman's hair, or the white of a girl's hand in the darkness, or——" She stopped wid a queer smile on her red lips.

"Or what?" I demanded.

"Or they hear the whisper of a voice in the ear, and forget me for the while. I will have no man wid a divided heart or memories of another."

"Ye should go to church and pray for your soul, me bould Mary," says I. "'Tis the pride of the flesh that is the sin in your heart. All men——"

"She drew her brows down over her eyes, and brushed her lips wid a white hand. 'All men?' says she. 'I am looking for me mate.'"

"And whin ye find him?" says I.

"Thin," says she. "I will give him me lips unknissed, and me hands to his hair, and I will kneel, even on thor-rns. I will be his sky by day, and the breath in his throat and the warmth in his blood and the dream in his heart by night. I will be the only name in his memory, and the only word on his lips. I will be his thought, and his hope, and his life, and his death. He shall niver want fire against the chill, or wind on his brow, or beauty for his eyes, apart from me. I will share him wid no one nor no thing. If he is wicked, I will be his hell; if he is good, I shall be his heaven." She sighed, and I saw the heave of her breast against her gown. So she spoke to me and passed on.

"The next day Marten was sent for to the office downtown, and wint, growling. 'I'll be back in an hour,' says he to the mate.

"But he came back in nayther an hour nor that day. And in the evening I

found him on the hill wid Mary Flanagan. They did not see me as they stood by a gate staring into one another's faces. But as I passed, I heard the black Dane mutter in his beard: 'Where have ye been these years?'

"And Mary answered softly: 'Hunting the world over for me mate.'

"The Dane thumped the broad breast of him wid a heavy fist, and bent his head. 'I am on fire,' he said loudly. 'Is it love—at last? I have niver been able to love, and—'tis very lonely.'

"That was all I heard, and I wint on quietly, for I knew that I should niver stand by any gate wid—wid—I am an ould felley, and the past is past.

"In the morning Marten strode up and down the deck, and saw nothing of the work we were about. Whin it was ten o'clock, he stepped ashore and was gone. Says the mate: 'What has come over the ould man?'

"'Hiven help us this next winter off the bar,' says I. 'I fear trouble wid him. He will be dreaming and staring toward the shore.'

"So it was. Whin ould *No. 153* was being towed away from her berth, outward bound for our station here, Mary Flanagan stood on the pier and looked up at Marten. And he looked down at her, and they said not a word. But that night, whin we lay once more at our anchor in the swell, Marten kept the deck all night, and the crew was afraid and muttered between themselves.

"'Twas a bad winter that of five years ago, and for weeks on end, not even mail was brought off to us. We saw the steamers coming in from the south, and the west, and the north, and passing in over the breakers. We saw thim coming out o' mornings—and none spoke to us, but hurried on their ways out of the perils of the bar. And ould *No. 153* was a floating hell for us all. Marten fair drove us to death, and thim brought us around again wid cur-rses and kicks. For no letters came, nor any news from shore.

"Thin came a day whin the sea went down, and the air was fresh and dry, and the sailing ships flocked in to the bar, and the tugs came out, and the

tender brought us the mail. I saw that the skipper had but one letter afther all the weeks. He scowled over it wid hard eyes, thin tore it up, and threw the pieces overside. For two days he said nothing at all. On the third he tapped the barometer and said: 'Twill be a gale by to-morrow.'

"'From the sou'west,' says the mate, squinting at the clouds. 'Saddle Mountain is covered wid mist, which is the sure sign. Heaven grant that our tackle holds!'

"There was a heavy, oily swell running in under us the while, and the wind was dead. So we knew that it would not be long till the gale broke. In on the bar we could see once in a while a big felley break into white. Yet to our astonishment a small boat came out, creeping over the sea toward us.

"'Whoever that is, is crazy,' says the mate, putting down his binoculars. 'And lucky they will be if they fetch the lightship before the wind comes.'

"Presintly the skipper comes up and stares at the boat a while. He said nothing, but wint below and got his glasses, and came up and stood by the rail and looked through thim a long time. Thin he heaved a sigh, and bent his head in thought.

"'Tis a woman!' cries the mate suddenly.

"So it was. The boat crept along, mile by mile, till she came slowly near us. 'Twas Mary Flanagan, rowing wid her bare white ar-rms, and her head turned over one shouldher. Thin I knew that the end of her long search was come.

"She finally swung the boat along-side and called up: 'Marten!'

"The skipper looked over the rail down into her eyes. 'Mary!' says he.

"'I have come for ye, Marten,' she answered, 'and I am weary.'

The captain of *No. 188* moved uneasily in his seat, and caught the mate's eye. We knew the story that Mickey was now to tell—the shame of Marten the Dane; the story never told outside the service. And yet—

Mickey brushed his bristling mustaches with one rough brown hand.

"Why say more?" he demanded. "Ye know that he wint—left his ship and his duty in the face of peril, for a woman. I saw him go over the side widout a look or a word to any of us, quit us and his ship in the hour before a gale. That is all ye know. Ye know that his name is niver mentioned in the Establishment, and none knows what became of him. But I know, and I will explain the story of the end, whin Mary Flanagan knelt for the first time in a score of years, and laughed at the thor-rns of the wild rose in her heart.

"Within an hour afther Marten the Dane was gone, the wind began to bristle the swell, which was running higher and higher, and breaking on the bar in mile-long strips of white. We could barely see the small boat creeping in toward the breakers. Thin the air thickened, and the mate opened his mouth for the first time.

"'Twill be a living gale,' says he. 'They will niver make it across the bar.'

"So it blew for three days, and old 153 fought it out as best she might; and we nursed her, and struggled for her, and saved her at last by the blood on the palms of our hands. Thin it was a week more before the tender got out to us. She knew nothing of Marten the Dane, nor of the woman who had taken him from his ship and his duty. But the boat had been picked up on the beach, broken, and filled with sand.

"'Twas a year later that I took train from Astoria to Portland, and we ran into a landslide along the river bank, and I was told that it was but three miles to the next town. 'I will walk,' says I. 'I have but three weeks to me vacation, and I will spend none of it waiting on a landslide.' So I tucked me papers under me hat wid me pay checks, and took me grip, and set out by a road in the dark.

"It was raining, and within two miles I was chilled, and knew that I was fair lost. So I made for a light amid the trees, and found a cabin, and knocked at the door loudly, for the wind was roaring overhead. Presintly it was

opened, and I stepped in, dripping, but polite.

"'Ma'am,' says I to the woman that held the lamp, 'I am lost. Can I beg a bite and a bit of fire?'"

"'Come in, Mickey,' says she. 'Twas Mary Flanagan."

"She stood there in high boots, a short skirt, and a flannel shirt open at the throat. But it was not the same Mary, for she was no longer girl, but woman. Yet I was afraid, and would have gone, for I knew her to be dead."

"'I am no ghost at all, Mickey dear,' says she. Thin she smiled, and I knew she was alive."

"'But——' says I."

"'Ye'll get dry and have a sup of the hot first,' says she, and set the lamp down on the little table. And whin the light fell about the room, I saw that there was a bed by the wall, and a man's beard flowed across the coverlet. I was silent, for it was the beard of Marten the black Dane, and his white face was turned to the rafters. So I sat wid me eyes on the floor."

"She brought me a bite and a toddy, and I took thim widout thanks, for the words stuck in me throat. But whin I was warm I looked up, and Mary met me eyes and smiled."

"'We reached the shore,' she whispered. 'Twas hard for him to save me from the sea. But he saved me. And thin I brought him here, and here we have lived ever since, for he told me in the boat that niver again could he look fellow man in the face, or see ould acquaintance."

"'And he is sick?' I demands."

"'He was terribly injured in the surf,' she says quietly. 'He has niver walked since that night."

"'And ye nurse him here?' I demanded presintly, looking into her shining eyes."

"'I do,' she replied, brushing the dark hair from her brow. 'He is paralyzed wid a broken back."

"Thin I sat and thought over many years, till I heard a sound from the bed. 'Twas Marten calling in a loud voice: 'Mary! Mary!'"

"And she slipped over to him, and I saw the glint of his eyes as he looked up, and—thin I heard the whisper of him in one word: 'Mother.' Thin I knew that not only was Marten's body wrecked, but the soul of him was hurt, too. I looked no more."

"But whin he was quiet, Mary came back and smiled tenderly. 'You heard?' she whispered."

"I bowed me head before her beauty."

"'He gave not only his strength to save me, but his mind as well,' she told me. 'What a man! What arms he put around me whin the boat was swept from under us! And he gave it all for me—his duty, his strong body, and his soul! Oh, I love him!'"

"'Twas for this ye sought the world over?' I said, whin the silence was a pain in the ears."

"She thought this a while, and thin she smiled again. 'Twas for this, Mickey,' she murmured through her red lips. 'I am his strength, and his mind, and his soul. I am the warmth in his blood, and the breath in his throat. I am his call in the night, and his vision by day. I am his heart. He—he can say but two words—me two names, Mickey, the one given me long ago, and the other that I'll never hear from any lips but his."

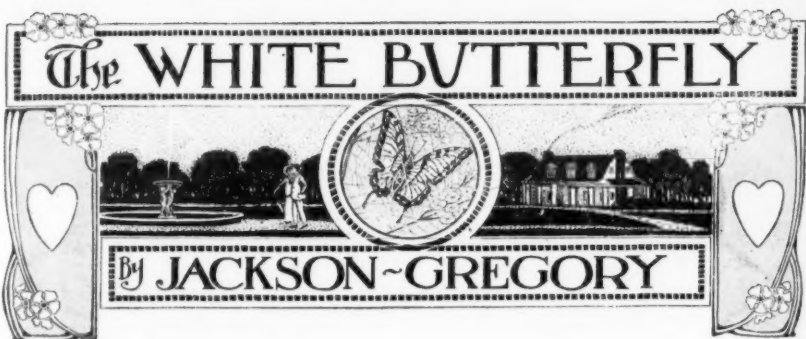
"'And ye're happy, Mary?' I asked her again."

"She nodded through her tears."

"Presintly she made me up a bed on the floor, and I turned in wid a rug over me. I could not go to sleep for the thought of the little girl on the hill wid the thor-rrn in her pretty knee, and her saying that she would niver kneel again. But before the dawn I heard a stir beyant me, and I saw Mary Flanagan on her knees be the bed of Marten the Dane, and I heard the sob in her throat, and I knew that she was bor-rrn a lover, bor-rrn to kneel amid the thor-rns of the wild rose that—that——"

Mickey glared at us all through shining eyes. Down his cheek rolled a tear which he did not brush away, for it was the wordless ending of his story."

The WHITE BUTTERFLY



By JACKSON-GREGORY

JOHN CHESTER had begun the conversation by addressing the sleek black cat upon the porch at his feet. Miss Puss had looked at him with her big, coldly unsympathetic eyes, and had gone out among the petunias and heliotrope, perhaps only because the sun had deserted the porch. At any rate, John Chester had finished the conversation by taking his brier into the circle of his confidence.

"Because a man is thirty, has an income that is sufficient, and is neither a cripple nor an imbecile, is that any reason that he should be hunted down by thoughtful mammas who have dutiful daughters, for all the world as if he were a beast in a jungle?"

Thus far had the consultation progressed when Miss Puss showed the warm, scarlet lining of her throat in a languid yawn, thrust out her delicate finger nails for a brief, contented examination, and, dreaming dreams with her wide yellow eyes, went out into the tangle of the garden.

"Because a man is an old bachelor belonging to that class in which he is labeled 'desirable' without even being considered as an individual, is that any reason why he should allow himself to be bagged by an old woman with a thin nose, and cold hands, and a dutiful daughter?"

And then the brier pipe went out. John Chester emptied the ashes upon the floor; there is such a pleasure in

homelike untidiness. Then he stood up, yawned luxuriously, and stretched his slender, clean-cut body very much as the velvety Miss Puss had done, and strolled out into the sunshine.

"We shall see," he told the little green spider who was dancing upon a sprig of honeysuckle, "what we have caught in our trap."

The little green spider danced over the edge of a leaf and hid his frail body behind the petal of a flower. And John Chester, feeling a faint twinge of something that he was afraid was loneliness, loitered down the narrow, winding walk to the Trap.

He passed slowly down a driveway over which the drooping branches of big elm trees interlaced. Then he turned to the left under a grapevine arbor, where a rustic sign said, "Visitors are welcome." And then he entered the mouth of the Trap.

It didn't look like a trap at all. Instead, it appeared to be merely a lazy, winding path with a thick hedge of Japanese cedar upon each side. The path twisted to right and left, branched here and there, and gradually the walls of Japanese cedar grew denser and higher. Somewhere ahead there was the plash and gurgle of a fountain. There would be rare water lilies there, a tiny emerald of lawn, a white statue with ivy clinging to it, a strip of blue sky through waving branches above. And ever and always the paths grew

more numerous, twisting like green snakes in torment, leading by crooked ways to the fountain. And only slowly would it dawn upon the stranger here that he was in a labyrinth, a maze that led easily enough to the fountain, but refused to lead again to the street a hundred yards away.

But one would be content to rest for a while in the heart of the Trap before thinking of worming a way out. For the fountain was ringed about with white marble, and the statue was not the atrocity that is prone to flaunt its nudity in summer gardens. And the birds nested here, unafraid. The lilies had golden hearts, and nodded at each other sunnily.

Upon the tiny lawn, at the door of the little summerhouse, John Chester came upon the thing that he had trapped. It was like a cluster of scarlet and gold autumn leaves. It stirred as John Chester's foot fell upon the marble rim of the fountain. And as it stirred, the scarlet resolved itself into a cloak, the gold into tousled curls.

"Good morning," said John Chester courteously.

Very big brown eyes were turned upon him.

"Good morning," answered the thing he had trapped.

"May I sit down?" asked John Chester.

"Yes, sir."

Whereupon he sat down upon the rustic seat and refilled his pipe.

"May I smoke?" he asked, smiling into the big brown eyes.

The tangled curls nodded, the dainty red lips pursed knowingly.

"Yes, sir. I don't smoke, though. I did once; father let me. Did you ever smoke a cigar?"

John Chester nodded.

"They make a man awful sick, don't they?"

Again he nodded.

"How old are you?" he demanded thoughtfully.

"Me? Oh, I'm five going on six. Or seven. I never can remember 'rithmetic. That's why I can't go to the theater. Cousin Billy said so."

"What did Cousin Billy say about it?"

"He said I couldn't go 'cause I didn't have a good head for figures. My name's John Gordon, junior. What's your name?"

"John Chester," replied John Chester. "We ought to be friends, don't you think?"

"Are you a junior, too?"

"No, John. I'm only an old bachelor."

John Gordon, junior, wriggled about and sat up.

"Is it much fun being—that?" he queried anxiously.

John Chester looked at the little fellow through a shifting veil of smoke and sighed.

"I don't know, John," he confessed. "I used to think so, but I don't know so well about it now."

"Why? Is now different somehow?"

"Yes. Somehow. Your father'd understand."

"Would he? Wouldn't mumsey? She's awful smart about understanding things."

"Yes," hesitatingly. "I suppose she would. But then she's a woman. There are some things that only men, like you, and your father, and me, can understand. Does your mother know that you are here?"

The child clasped his arms about his knees, and, with his head far back, stared up into the patches of blue through the waving branches.

"Yes," he answered gently. "Mother always knows everything I do. That's why sometimes I don't do things I am going to do."

"Where is she this morning?"

John Gordon, junior, brought his grave eyes back from the sky and bestowed a long look of surprise upon the ignorance of John Chester.

"Don't you know?" he asked at last. "Mother's dead. She's up there, 'way, 'way up."

Again his big, soft-brown eyes went the way of the dancing strips of blue sky. John Chester looked at him curiously.

"Then who is mumsey?" he asked, after a moment.

"Oh, mumsey!" John Gordon, junior, laughed gleefully. "She's just mumsey, that's all. Did you think she was mother?"

"Is mumsey good to you, John?" John Chester hurried to ask.

"Yes, sir. She's awful good. She let me climb a tree after an eagle's nest one time. The eggs were all hatched, though. Mumsey says that all old ladies are good to little boys."

"So mumsey is old?"

"Didn't you know that? My, there are lots of things you don't know. Why don't you go to school? I'm going some time. Mumsey says I can."

"How old is she?"

John Gordon, junior, shook his head until the curls whipped one another across his rosy face.

"She's awful old. I think she's the oldest old lady in the world. She said so once. I guess," thoughtfully, "she's ninety."

John Chester whistled.

"Mother used to be older," went on the child, without observing the impression he had created, "but she's younger now. And she has great, big, soft, white wings, and at nighttime, when the stars come out 'way up there to play, mother is somewhere with them. And she's awful happy, too; but she always thinks about me and father, and will be glad when we can come up, too, and watch the stars with her. And some time, when I'm a big man like you, some night I'll go to sleep, and pretty soon I'll wake up and see mother reaching out her hands to me like she used to do when I was little. And then I'll just go with her, and we'll fly, and fly, and fly until we come to the sky; if I'm a good man and always remember that mother's watching me. 'Cause she watches just the same as she used to when I was little in the cradle. But it's awful hard to remember, sometimes."

"Yes," John Chester said very quietly. "It is very hard to remember."

The head with its profusion of twisted gold, and the head with the

short-cropped dark hair, shook in unison, and, as one breath, two sighs arose from John Gordon, junior, and John Chester, bachelor.

"I got in here and I couldn't get out, so I stayed," John Gordon explained. "Do you think the man would care?"

"No. He wouldn't care. He likes little boys. He sometimes wishes he had a little boy of his own."

John Gordon, junior, looked interested.

"Why doesn't he get him one, then?"

"There are reasons and reasons, my little man."

"Is he very poor?" came with a puzzled frown. "Can't he afford a little boy?"

"It isn't that." The old bachelor was finding the first opportunity of a lifetime to unburden himself. "You see, he'd have to find a mother for his little boy first. Little boys have to have mothers. And he can't find anybody to marry that he wants to marry."

The child's eyes had shown interest, but as the man's voice grew low-toned, the yellow curls shook slowly from side to side.

"Mumsey's going to marry some time. She said so. Is marrying awful bad?"

"I don't know. Why?"

"'Cause mumsey cried. And mumsey don't ever cry much."

"Maybe it was because she was so very, very happy," suggested John, the bachelor, a little bitterly.

Little John pursed up scornful lips.

"People laugh when they're happy," he scoffed. "Mumsey's eyes were all red. So she was awful sad."

"But I thought mumsey was awful old? Isn't she too old to marry?"

"But he's awful old, too, I guess. He looks almost as old as you. And he's got a 'mobile, and horses, and a watch, and a diamond ring."

A little sneer came up in John Chester's heart. Always that, always buying and selling, the bartering of name for money, of a fair body for a diamond ring. Holy matrimony!

"I am afraid, my little fellow, that I shall never have a little boy of my own,"

he said, so harshly that the big brown eyes came back to his face with a start.

"And mumsey don't like him very well, either," went on the younger John thoughtfully. "I heard her tell father so one time."

"Oh, that doesn't matter." The harsh laugh again brought the wondering eyes to the elder John's face. And then, after a pause: "And this mumsey of yours, who is going to marry, and have a 'mobile, and diamonds—is she the same one who told you about your mother watching and waiting for you?"

"Yes, sir. There isn't but one mumsey, you know."

"No. I thought that there might be two. Come here, John Gordon, junior, and I'll show you where a little white butterfly is trying to get herself entangled in a spider's web."

The little fellow scrambled to his feet, his face flushed and eager, his eyes dancing. And as he got to his feet and scurried across the strip of lawn, the soul of John Chester was shocked. For John Gordon, junior, who had seemed a perfect, beautiful, graceful baby, dragged one crippled leg painfully, and one withered arm hung, swinging like a dead thing, at his side. There was so much of beauty in the pure little face that the maimed side made the man shiver.

"Does your side hurt you, John?" he asked, almost softly, as he put his two strong arms about the frail little body.

"Sometimes," admitted the little cripple cheerfully. "Where is the butterfly and the spider? Will he eat her up?"

"I don't know. We'll see in a minute. Has a doctor tried to make your side well?"

John Gordon, junior, snuggled into the arms which drew a trifle closer about him.

"No, sir. But mumsey says that pretty soon she'll have lots of money, and then she will make me all well. It's awful good to have money, isn't it?"

"I hadn't thought of the matter, but I dare say you are right. Yes, it is awful good to have lots of money. I'd like to know your mumsey, John."

"Don't you know mumsey?" It was

hard to say whether there was more of surprise or of incredulity in the tones.

"I thought I did. I am not sure now."

"You don't know lots of things, do you? I think you'd better go to school."

"Maybe I had better go to school."

"And the white butterfly and the spider, please?" insisted John Gordon, junior.

"First tell me about the man with the 'mobile and the diamond. What does he look like?"

"Well, he isn't very pretty. His nose is red and sort of blue, and his chin looks like he had another one inside his collar, and his eyes look like Benny's."

"And who is Benny?"

"Don't you know? Why, Benny's my little pet pig!"

"Oh!" said John Chester.

"And the white butterfly?"

John Chester heard a light footfall upon the walk at the other side of the Japanese cedar hedge. So he answered hastily:

"If you will run over there and look about that old tree you might be able to save the butterfly. Now run."

The little lame figure sidled away eagerly. And John Chester turned to greet the other thing that had come into his trap. She was slight—girlishly slight—and bright, and nineteen. The dark brown of her hair was shot with waves of light. Her eyes were big, and gray, and at once both merry and tender. Her own fingers had made her dress, he knew. And he knew that it was remarkably becoming. No, as yet there was no ring upon her finger.

"Good morning," he said quietly. And then: "So you are mumsey, are you?"

Her smile spilled over from her eyes, and made pretty curves of her red lips, setting twin dimples at the corners of her mouth.

"So John has been visiting you?" she said.

"Yes. I am John Chester. He has told me about you. Can nothing be

done for the poor little fellow? Pardon me," as he saw the pain in her eyes; "you see, I have taken a very great interest in him."

"Yes." Her tone was lifeless. He felt like a brute. "We are going to have him treated by a great German specialist. He will be cured—soon."

"And you are going to sell yourself, body and soul, and eternal happiness, that he may be made strong?"

"John has been telling you things? How does a child know so much? Yes, I am going to sell myself body and soul, and eternal happiness. It is the only way. It doesn't matter."

There was no bitterness in her voice, no surprise, even, that he was asking her such things, that she was answering. Only a dull, dead, hopeless monotone.

"You are a very fine girl, mumsey," he told her frankly. "But, after all, you are only a little girl. You should have some one to tell you that you must not do this thing."

And as frankly she answered him:

"I am more than a little girl, John Chester. I am a woman. And he is a baby. Don't you see?"

He shook his head.

"A man is not necessarily a fool. He knows love as well as a woman. Yes, and the same kind of love! If he be a man, he is father and mother as well as husband to the woman he marries. There is the same yearning, the same protection, the same tenderness, that the woman feels for her baby, or for all babies that are motherless. For all natural women, be they good or bad, are the mothers of all motherless babies. I know how you feel. But it is wrong."

"I did not think that a man would understand," she said simply. "I am glad that you do. And, please, where is John now?"

"John is playing over yonder where you see the top branches of the big elm tree. He is all right. And I want to talk with you."

He marveled at the way in which the sauciness of her chased away the shadows of a moment ago; those deep shadows that sometimes drift suddenly

upon the youngest face in the world, as if they were grim reminders that old age, after all, lurks very near. And he wondered at the quick gesture of the little rosy hands, the flowerlike poise of the delicate, graceful, tipilted face upon the slender white throat.

"You force me to stupid, necessary platitudes, John Chester. We really haven't been introduced, you know. We must not forget!"

"No. We must remember. We must remember that we have been introduced. That John Gordon, junior, has made us known to each other. He will be a man some day, a strong, good man, thanks to you. Won't he?"

He said the words sternly, almost angrily. His eyes held hers steadily. She put her head back—he could see lines of firmness about the rounded chin—and answered him quietly:

"Yes. He will be a strong man, as well and perfect physically as you are. And I pray God that he will be a good man—for his mother's sake."

"He will be. Then, some day, when the one conclusion comes to such a marriage as you are making, he will know. He will be a man who can never be happy because he will know that there is a woman who, too, might have been happy but that she sacrificed her soul and her body, and her eternal happiness, that he might not have a crooked back! Do you know how he will feel, mumsey?"

She shook her head.

"He will never know all that. No one will know. And he will be all that his mother wanted her boy to be. I know."

"Would you like to know," he went on relentlessly, "that your own health and chance for happiness had been bought by a woman paying as you are paying? Would you?"

His own earnestness surprised him as he stood waiting for her answer. Her loveliness was as pure, as sweet a thing as the beauty of a flower. She was builded for light, and laughter, and love. What though he had never seen her before, would never see her again—

It takes some men a year to know when they have found the right woman. It was taking John Chester considerably less.

"But I will see you again," he told himself positively. And he told her, with the same positiveness: "You must not do this thing. I shall not allow you to do it!"

"You have been very kind, or very forward, to talk to me as you have done," she replied very quietly. "And in either case I have been very foolish to listen to you. And now I am going."

She turned and moved toward the big elm tree.

"You have not answered my question yet," he insisted.

"No," she told him in the same quiet tones. "I have not. And there is no reason why I should answer your questions. Besides, there is no use."

"No use," he cried triumphantly. "No use, because I know the answer as well as you do!"

"And if you do? There is no other way." She had paused and was facing him, her chin slightly lifted.

"There is another way!" His words took fire from the emotions that flared up within him as he thought of the poor little twisted body, and of her own delicate loveliness. "There is a way! Do you know that there are thousands of men who have more money than they want? Do you know that, although

money builds a shell around a man, it does not harden his heart? Do you know that there are men, rich men, who, if they but caught a sight of that brave, crippled little fellow, would buy his health back for him? Do you know that?"

"No." There was something of despair in the monosyllable, much of surety. "For I have tried. And unless"—her face and voice grew bitter together—"unless I had something to give for the money, I could not get it."

"You did not come to me!"

"You mean?" Her voice faltered and broke. She took a single step toward him, raised her hands a little, and let them fall to her side.

"I mean," said John Chester bluntly, "that I am going to look out for my namesake. And for any other motherless children I find losing their way in a tangle of paths. And now you are going to meet Mrs. Beldon, who keeps house for me, and then we shall have tea together upon my porch. John!"

Through the hedge came a flicker of scarlet and gold.

"I can't find the white butterfly!" came John Gordon, junior's voice, quivering as it reached them. "Did the spider eat her up?"

"No," answered John Chester, almost in a whisper, it would seem to the grave, wet gray eyes before him. "The white butterfly is free again."



AN APRIL SHOWER

SHE loosed her hair, and as she downward brushed
The gems that in her tresses had been strung,
Cascades of pearl through bosk and bracken rushed;
To new-split buds, large opals, quaking, clung.
She bound her locks anew, with brilliant band—
A rainbow curved above the dripping land.

HARRIET WHITNEY SYMONDS.

Peach-Blossom-of-the-Tiny-Feet



KATHERINE TAYLOR CRAIG

PEACH - BLOSSOM - OF - THE-TINY-FEET lay with her first-born in the hollow of her arm. The long, unmerciful hours of travail had left her exhausted as a spent wave.

The moisture on her white forehead belied the carefully carmined cheeks, although the contented curve of her crimsoned lips contradicted the piteous lines about her childish mouth; for all was well with Peach Blossom—she had returned from the jaws of death bearing a man-child.

Surely, in view of the birth of a son, Sing Fat, her lord and master, would pardon the dereliction of her illness and the consequent defiance of race tradition in the summoning of the white-devil doctor. And drawing her babe against her side, Peach Blossom slept.

"Give her a teaspoonful of this medicine every hour, if she's awake, but don't disturb her," Doctor Lane addressed Suie, the Chinese midwife, then turned to the fragile pair in the huge bedstead, carved with ponderous monsters whose sardonic grins upon the woman with the flower face irresistibly suggested Sing Fat, the merchant.

"Five quilt too much; room heap hot." Throwing aside three superb brocades, the American physician crossed to the windows.

He opened them wide; the breeze whipped the heavy draperies and swayed the embroidered screens by

means of which Sing Fat manifested his appreciation of his high-caste wife.

"Too many things this room," pursued Doctor Lane.

Suie blinked in impersonal silence upon gray-embroidered storks and lilac wistarias that the wind was fluttering into a semblance of life.

"To-morrow I bring more medicine; good-by." Smiling at her persistent silence, Doctor Lane departed.

Immovable, and apparently inattentive, Suie remained squatted upon her heels. When a screen toppled, she rose, deftly caught and replaced it, closed the windows, and opened a closet door. A burst of stercoraceous steam from a mysterious-looking saucepan upon a coal-oil stove of ancient and odoriferous design, clouded the room. This entire apparatus Suie lifted to the foot of Peach Blossom's bed, then, implacably, though not untenderly, she replaced the coverlets removed by Doctor Lane, adding by way of precaution three more.

The conventionally medicinal spoons and glasses next demanded her attention, and she carefully emptied the contents of each tumbler into a blatantly cheap and Occidental cuspidor. Then, lighting a dozen sticks of incense before Sing Fat's ancestral shrine in a corner of the room, Suie resumed her seat upon her heels, and watched her sleeping charges.

Doctor Lane found Sing Fat placidly waiting upon a tourist who was amusing himself by blowing crinkles of tis-

sue paper into fowls of normal size and abnormal coloring.

The merchant, ceremoniously excusing himself, left the customer to the toys, and led the physician back of a portière that served to screen treasures of Oriental art from the fingering of ordinary purchasers. As the gold-and-blue embroidered curtain swept between Sing Fat and the tourist, a small, unostentatious Chinaman appeared from the shadows of a huge Nagoya vase and began dusting the shelves. Absorbed in his task, the little Asiatic apparently saw nothing; yet once, as the tourist touched an ivory, he encountered a steady glance from a pair of heavy-lidded eyes.

"She's all right now," Doctor Lane accepted a tawdry wicker chair, hideously incongruous amid the jades, ivories, and brocades.

"That's good," commented Sing Fat equably. "Too bad to have had her die; little-foot women are expensive and rare— How much do I owe you, doctor?"

The American hesitated between his customary fee and the temptation to discourage Chinese patients who might interfere with his Caucasian practice.

"One thousand dollars," he finally answered.

"Have a cup of tea while I get the money from my safe; or do you prefer wine?" asked Sing Fat blandly.

Notwithstanding Doctor Lane's refusal, a servant appeared with the tray.

"Kindly sign this receipt, doctor." Sing Fat tendered the paper and a pile of twenty-dollar gold pieces. "Count them, please."

The American shook his head; he knew the racial honesty of the Chinese.

"I insist," said Sing Fat.

As Doctor Lane finished counting, his host produced a Satsuma vase. "Please accept this."

"Thank you," protested the physician, "but—"

"Again, I insist," Sing Fat interrupted. "Making gifts is a custom of my people, even as overcharging is a custom of your people."

"Er—er—thank you, I shall look in to-morrow," stammered the American.

"I thank you," was the suave reply. "If I require you, I shall send for you."

"I'll not wait; I should see the patient again; I'll charge nothing—you've already—"

"When I need you I shall send," iterated Sing Fat.

Doctor Lane found the vase upon the seat of the carriage provided to take him home. As the vehicle swung the corner of Fish Alley, the American caught a glimpse of the Chinaman busily pasting devil papers upon the door of the bazaar, and understood that, come what might, he would see no more of Peach Blossom and her son.

Despite the necessity for conciliatory offerings to outraged ancestors, and notwithstanding the dire predictions of Sing Fat's friends as to evil that must follow the white devil's visit, Peach Blossom and her son continued to thrive. As their welfare became established, even the more orthodox of Sing Fat's coreligionists ignored his lapse of faith and called to congratulate him upon the arrival of a son. The merchant received their tactful inquiries as to his material prosperity with complacency; he was enlarging his bazaar; he was proud of Sing Fun, his son, and boastful of Peach Blossom, his purchase, as he exhibited her shoes, a bare two inches long. The lady herself no male visitor might behold, for since buying a high-caste woman, Sing Fat had grown punctiliously observant of the customs of the class to which he did not belong.

The men having paid their respect to the father, the women visited the mother. They scrutinized the child from head to foot, and, finding nothing amiss, turned to Peach Blossom. Argus-eyed in their determination to discover the curse, if curse there were, these daughters of the river dwellers, who had voluntarily crossed the ocean, descended in droves upon the aristocrat who had been carefully sheltered since the day that her parents, having graciously decided to waive the custom that

condemns girl babies to death, had begun to prepare for the advantageous disposition of her person, painting her face, binding her feet, and finally placing her sale in the hands of Sing Fat's Canton agent.

Peach Blossom received her guests with graciousness, although she doubtless realized that while she might live among them, she never would, nor ever could, be of them. She was glad when they left her to lie upon the floor and romp with her baby until it became time to dress for Sing Fat's return from the bazaar.

Once, when he came early, he found the pair sprawling happily; whereupon Peach Blossom, overwhelmed, had risen to rearrange the sumptuous brocades about her slender person, expressing the while her wifely submission, as she had been taught by the mother in far-off Canton, to whom she seldom spared a thought in these luxurious days, any more than a butterfly recalls its chrysalis.

Sing Fat accepted her homage with the smug pleasure of a man confident of the favor of his gods; for these days were filled with joy for the little household.

Suie, the nurse, however, was one exception to the general happiness; she glowered like a threatening cloud, as she lavished the uncouth care that intuition told Peach Blossom was tenderness, and her gloom cast its shadow over all. Even when Sing Fat attempted to propitiate her with sweetmeats and gay ornaments, Suie accepted his overtures appreciatively, but with solemnity, unsmiling alike at his favor and at his labored jests.

At first the merchant accepted Suie's attitude as a warning; redoubling his vigilance in financial affairs and refraining from his usual game of fan-tan in Lung Chung's gambling house three stories under the cellar next door. He smiled when the place was raided, and, recognizing that he had outwitted the gods, promptly lost patience with Suie.

She must depart the moment Fun ceased to need her. Peach Blossom

heard her lord's decree with sorrow, though without questioning his decision. Great silent tears stood in her eyes as she entreated the yellow woman to mend her ways, for Peach Blossom's was a tender heart, whose tendrils twined around those about her.

Suie did not look at her mistress. "Wait," she said.

And Peach Blossom, gathering hope, wiped her tears and toddled to where her baby lay asleep. Already the sturdy little face was comical with the self-will of his sex, and racial yellow blended with the pink of infancy into the coloring of a tea rose. He stirred when she kissed the useless, clenched fingers, and, with a sly glance toward Suie, Peach Blossom slipped to the balcony.

The sun was shining upon bowls of sacred lilies, abloom for the Chinese New Year, which comes in the spring-time, when the world is young, instead of in winter, when the cold is making the earth old, as does the New Year of the white devils.

The joy of youth was in the air, and in Peach Blossom's veins, and she was tempted to sing aloud, or to pick a stone from a bowl of bulbs and hurl it recklessly into the street. Of course, however, such frivolities were beneath the consideration of one of Sing Fat's household, and, thrusting aside the temptation, she stood swaying like a flower upon its stalk.

A white devil passing in the street looked up at the balcony.

With a superstitious shudder, she recognized Doctor Lane, and, regardless of the embroidered butterflies on her gown, cuddled down amid the sprays of climbing fuchsia.

When Suie brought Fun to the balcony, Peach Blossom lifted a warning finger and drew the fuchsia trails about her.

Unsmiling, the nurse joined the game by turning Fun's back to his mother, who dragged her costly silks across the dusty floor on hands and knees.

Suddenly rising, she peered over Suie's shoulder with shining eyes. Fun did not return the rapturous look; the

marvelous child seemed absorbed in watching the golden lettering upon the joss house across the street.

Disappointed, but still smiling, Peach Blossom slipped in front of Suie, between Fun's great black eyes and what they seemed to watch. Still no gleam of recognition, although the direction of his stare remained unaltered; and when she thrust her face near his, he did not lower his lids.

Peach Blossom looked at Suie, puzzled.

"Stand at his feet; say nothing!" The nurse spoke roughly, yet the child's eyes turned to follow the sound.

With a quiver of pain that her own baby should prefer a servant's harsh voice to his mother's tender smile, Peach Blossom obeyed, bravely hiding her trembling lips, and, in a burst of maternal forgiveness, she patted the soft little cheek. Still, he did not look at her, although he cooed and held out his hands before him.

"Now call him," commanded Suie.

An ecstatic smile overspread the child's face, and his black eyes, filled with light, followed his mother's voice.

Peach Blossom gurgled joyously, but now Suie was silent.

The yellow woman rose from her heels and left the balcony, the mother following, amused at the evident jealousy that caused the servant to ignore her mistress' tiny feet and to stride ahead down the length of the room.

Even when Peach Blossom staggered and would have fallen over a chair, Suie continued oblivious.

Fun whimpered as he lay among the writhing ebon monsters upon the bed, but Suie seemed curiously indifferent; it was Peach Blossom herself who struggled indignantly to his side.

The nurse was lighting a candle, an extraordinary and extravagant performance upon a spring day, with the world alight with blossoms.

Peach Blossom, however, administered no rebuke; Fun no longer noticed Suie, and that was sufficient punishment. With his eyes staring into his mother's face, he seemed listening for her voice.

Suie held the candle so close that Peach Blossom cried out lest a drop of melted grease fall upon the child; yet Fun's eyes still rested upon his mother, not upon Suie or her flame. She waved the light to and fro, and still Fun did not deign a glance in her direction.

Pity for the old woman's disappointment checked Peach Blossom's laughter.

Suie placed the candle upon the table and turned to Peach Blossom.

"The curse has fallen," she said slowly; "your child is blind."

The god's vengeance upon her and upon her boy!

Peach Blossom did not question it any more than she asked why Sing Fat now regarded her with hatred, or than she wondered that his pride should droop to shame, or than she sought the reason for the rancor of the other women.

In frightened acquiescence to her own guilt, she accepted her removal from the airy room with its wistaria embroideries and its balcony. The cellar two stories beneath the bazaar was dank, and its chill penetrated her chest and made her bones ache, especially after she gave her quilted jacket to the baby; but what did a woman accursed deserve?

At first the rats frightened her, and she must summon all her courage to sit night after night and drive them from her sleeping child, until finally they came no more.

Then there were dark passages that kept her in momentary dread of ghosts, goblins, and other horrors which must surely lie awaiting an opportunity to seize a wicked creature like herself; but although this fear never completely faded, it also diminished with time.

Yet, at their worst, these trials were trivial as compared to her anxiety when she was summoned each day by her successor to the room that had formerly been hers. For the curse of his gods upon one experiment had not deterred Sing Fat from further ventures in domesticity, and without delay he had replaced Peach Blossom with a yellow daughter of the people, whose

splay feet, high cheekbones, and huge stature contrasted trenchantly with the delicate features of her predecessor. And as Fun grew older, Peach Blossom's anxiety upon these occasions increased, for the boy was active, despite his affliction, and Suie had gone the way of the happy days, leaving no one to lend a hand with the care of the child.

She made no complaint, however, as she obeyed the whims of her successor. Even when the other woman gave birth to a daughter and her failure to fulfill Sing Fat's hopes was attributed to the curse upon Peach Blossom, the latter accepted the accusation in silence, and did not raise her head when she was ordered from the room upstairs, or complain when the food supply, already pitifully scant, was divided into half, in punishment of her uselessness.

The privilege of her boy's uninterrupted companionship more than outweighed the pangs of mere hunger, and from the pinnacle of her maternal pride, she pitied the disappointed woman who condemned her. Had Fun been puny or ailing, her lot might have become embittered, but the child's vitality swept the mother in its wholesome, happy tide, and, unknown to herself, she grew with him.

The change began with her footsteps as she taught him to walk in the semi-darkness that served his sightless eyes equally with the glare of daylight. At first she staggered and faltered upon the tired little feet, but presently, hand and hand, Peach Blossom and Fun walked forth into the sunlight. Later his activity outstripped her, and left her trembling between pride in his strength and fear for his helplessness, and necessity waked her mind into articulate thought.

Fun was three years old when disillusionment cast its first shadow. The arrival of a second daughter had roused afresh Sing Fat's resentment against Peach Blossom, and he was in no mood to be merciful toward the blind boy who had escaped from his mother's vigilance and wandered into his father's bazaar. Beaten and sore, Fun was returned to

the cellar with an injunction that never, under any circumstances, should he venture into the august presence of his parent. He was too young to grasp the meaning of his mother's explanation, so she must put the incident aside in the hope that he might forget.

As he learned speech, Fun would imitate the other children who played about the square, at the foot of the golden memorial sails of the Robert Louis Stevenson monument. He had no conception of their presence, or of their invariable withdrawal at his approach, until one day a little one, untainted by the superstition of the rest, lingered to play with the blind boy. In an ecstasy of delighted companionship, Fun romped with his new friend, while Peach Blossom, watching, found no heart to interfere. Suddenly the child was snatched away by outraged parents, and Fun was left, puzzled and hurt.

During the boy's wistful interval of waiting for the vanished playmate, Peach Blossom gave birth to the imagination that was to bless the future years.

Her erstwhile room, with its transcending luxury of balcony and tapestry, became the gorgeous background for her son's life. He was a prince in royal robes, and the rents in his tattered jacket, which his fingers were but too deft at discovering, became silken embellishments of her fancy. The services that she daily rendered were attributed to various attendants with mythical names, and the uncertainty of the poor little willing feet that never could be relied upon, was represented as a fault to be blamed or pitied as Fun's humor might dictate. The scant, coarse food assumed various names; and a stray cat, lamed and battered by many frays, became a royal pet, sent from afar by the father whom Fun had never seen. Sacred lilies thrown from the joss house were picked from the street and presented as tributes from loving subjects, whose loyal messages were carefully delivered through Peach Blossom, while Fun reveled in the odor of the dying flowers.

With broken toys and bits of glass, she evolved wonderful games from her subconsciousness, the residue, perhaps, of some forgotten life. Forgiveness and patience she was practicing as well as teaching, unaware that her own soul was developing and growing through her effort for her child.

She implanted a love for his father; not the complacent merchant of actuality, but a parent composite of her somewhat nebulous ideas of Joss, the reflection of the mother love in her heart, and a judicious mixture of the Sing Fat of her early acquaintance. From this last picture Fun developed and assimilated the Oriental attitude. His father was a man; he was a man; his mother—a woman.

Once, in the midst of her well-worn description of their hero, Fun laughed. "My father shall kill the man who beat me when I was little," he declared.

Upon the birth of his seventh daughter, Sing Fat commanded Peach Blossom to act as midwife. The gods had done their worst in withholding sons; a few curses more or less would have small effect upon the pathetic life of the undesired baby girl.

Fun lay asleep when the summons came to his mother, and she left the cellar without awakening him; one sad lesson had implanted caution for all time.

She was late in returning; the candle that she had left in the passage had guttered out, and there was no crack of light under her door.

Instinct warned her as she turned the rattling knob. When she called there was no answer. She groped for the matches and struck a light.

He was not there.

The cat, roused from its nap, stretched, and stood looking into her face as if it knew. She seized it, stared desperately into its eyes; then, realizing her folly, thrust it upon the floor. It ran at her heels as she sped down the dark passage up into the light of the bazaar.

Voices came through the embroidered portière from the back room of jade and cloisonné. A multitude of strange

white devil women filled the tiny place; but they failed to abash her, for Fun was in their midst, and Sing Fat held him by the arm.

The women were chattering and fingering possible purchases after the bold fashion of the females of their race, but the boy and the man were silent, although Peach Blossom read terror in Fun's uplifted face, and there was the purpling stain of a blow upon one cheek.

Sing Fat saw her with a rage that transcended Oriental calm; he lifted his clenched fist upon Fun.

With a whine Peach Blossom sprang forward and caught the blow.

"Confound the brute! See here, if you strike that woman again, I'll have you arrested, sabe?"

Peach Blossom, failing to understand the white devil's word, attributed Sing Fat's sudden cessation of hostilities to some inexplicable, perhaps divine, interposition.

"By Jove!" cried Doctor Lane to his companions, "it's the little-foot woman I was telling you about; they say there's but one in America. Sing Fat, what's the kid been doing to make you beat him?"

"Nothing; but he's blind and doesn't see very well, thank you," was the bland reply.

"Blind!" The physician looked from the child to the mother, and read their neglected garments and white faces.

"And you beat him because he's blind, you big, yellow devil?"

"Blind boys no good," graciously assented Sing Fat.

"Let's have a look at you, my boy." Doctor Lane addressed Fun, who understood no syllable, though he did not resist the gentle, practiced hand that led him to the window, nor did he flinch beneath the skillful fingers that lifted his eyelids and examined the pupils.

"A temporary trouble; let me have him a while," suggested Doctor Lane to Sing Fat.

"I'll not pay you one cent," demurred the parent.

"That's all right; there are several

visits I owe you," retorted Doctor Lane. "May I take him home?"

"Very well," shrugged Sing Fat indifferently. "Do your ladies wish to buy any more teacups?"

To Peach Blossom, bewildered and uncomprehending, the veritable powers of darkness seemed loosed and at play. Terror urged her to get her child out of harm's way, and the pitiful instinct of primitive motherhood prompted her to try and draw the white devils' attention from her treasure; like a little, mad moth miller she fluttered about, striving vainly to divert them to herself. Finally she knelt at Doctor Lane's feet, her hands uplifted, supplicating.

"Poor little soul," he observed, construing her tremulous efforts into ebullitions of gratitude. "She, at least, is appreciative."

Peach Blossom's hope rose as he assisted her to her feet, but grayed in despair a moment later, when he led Fun away, followed by the tribe of white devil women. She reached the door of the bazaar just as Fun was lifted into the waiting automobile, and Doctor Lane heard her wail of despair.

"I forgot to let her tell her boy good-by," he said remorsefully. "If I'd anywhere to put her, I'd take her along to look after him."

He returned Fun to her frantic clasp, and stood waiting for the farewells to end; at length, in despair, he drew the child away and returned him to the car.

When Peach Blossom would have followed the automobile through the streets, Sing Fat's retainers stepped forward and held her relentlessly, and she could only stare after the retreating vehicle. It turned a corner, out of sight, and she curled into unconsciousness like a frosted flower.

During the empty months that followed she lay numbly staring at Fun's broken toys, gathered from the dust heaps. She did not ask how she had reached her cellar, nor wonder why her existence should continue endlessly, when the mainspring of her life had gone. During interminable days that neither began nor ended, she was

vaguely cognizant of a ministering presence forcing her to take the nourishment that she was too indifferent to refuse.

Once, at a tender touch on her forehead, she opened her eyes in a quick, foolish hope that she had been lying in a horrid nightmare, and that, after all, Fun was still beside her. But it was only Tsai, the mother of a mere girl baby who had died, who bent over Peach Blossom, and again darkness fell.

When at length confused sounds of laughter and chattering penetrated the void of her consciousness, her detachment from the issues of life prevented her resentment, though she vaguely recognized that Sing Fat's wives and daughters swarmed about her. They combed her matted hair, painted her worn face, and dressed her in costly garments, to all of which she submitted without resistance; only when some one spoke Fun's name did she shriek aloud and bid them all be silent. Unnoticing and without a thrill for its memories or its splendor, she was led to the old gorgeous room upstairs. Here Sing Fat awaited her, and with a ceremonious bow escorted her to a seat of honor that had been placed amid the fuchsia trails on the balcony overhanging the street.

White-lipped and silent, she accepted the chair, without seeming to hear him when he addressed her as the mother of his first-born. Nor did she lift her heavy lids until Tsai placed a bunch of sacred lilies in her hands; then, with a softening face, she seemed to listen to what Tsai endeavored to make her understand.

Again, however, the mention of Fun's name brought a start and a moan, and Tsai, fearful lest Peach Blossom shriek aloud as before, and thus disgrace Sing Fat's honorable household, needs must be silent, trusting that the gods themselves would tell the mother of her son's return, and of his miraculous recovery from blindness.

Meanwhile, Sing Fat, having duly arranged his family upon the balcony, took his station beneath, among his

friends assembled upon the threshold of the bazaar. During the entire six months that Fun had been under Doctor Lane's treatment, the merchant had given no heed to the messages that the doctor had sent regarding the boy's condition, but now that his recovery was a demonstrated fact, the father accepted it with the complacent assumption of a victory over the gods.

A limousine turned the street corner. Upon its seat, beside the gray-clad figure of the white devil doctor, was the dark-blue jacket of a Chinese merchant. The watchers upon the step were breathlessly silent and incredulous. Six months of scientific treatment had straightened the cowering child into manhood, and there was a strange, placid dignity in the young face. The puzzled eyes alone betrayed a new outlook upon life as they peered eagerly beneath the round skullcap, scrutinizing in perplexity, first the yellow faces, then the white man by his side, and finally his own saffron-hued hands.

A remark of Doctor Lane's seemed to increase rather than to diminish the lad's bewilderment; evidently his English was still imperfect. His brows were knit as he watched Sing Fat, who came toward the car that had drawn up beside the step.

Surely the sea breeze was responsible for the fluttering sleeves and trembling fingers, for Sing Fat's smile was placidity personified as he opened the door and addressed Fun in Chinese.

The boy brightened and held out his hand in cordial American fashion, although he answered with the deference and affection that his mother had taught in the cellar. When Fun had left the car, the merchant turned to Doctor Lane and poured forth gratitude in the flowery ceremonial language of the oldest race in the world, overwhelming the

American with compliments until he thankfully made his escape in the car.

After which Sing Fat's friends gathered about the pair, with the suave, repressed expressions of joy that Orientals give their loved ones, reserving eloquence for the world outside. And from the heights of placid self-gratulation, Sing Fat watched his first-born, with never a thought for the balcony overhead.

The light had returned to Peach Blossom's face, and she leaned far over the rail; her lips parted as if she would have called, but no sound came at her bidding, and Fun did not look up. Then the other women, ever mindful of the customs of their sex, warned her into silence, and she could only stand apart with piteous, anguished eyes.

Standing there beside the father whom she had taught him to love, her boy had no room in his heart for his mother. He was lost.

Quivering, she lifted the bunch of lilies and threw them. They fell into his arms, and he turned. Her eager eyes met his, but he stared, unrecognizing, and her soul died within her.

His face was still uplifted as again and again he slowly inhaled the perfume of the flowers. The puzzled eyes were growing soft and bright under the familiar fragrance, and presently the boy drew a little apart from his father and stood looking upward at the woman in the balcony.

Suddenly the wistful eyes flashed with joy, and the carefully stolid features were transformed with the infinite tenderness and appeal of childhood.

"My mother!" he cried, stretching his arms to where she stood.

And although etiquette held her a silent prisoner, Peach Blossom was content.



ALIEN BLOOD

BY LOUISE -RICE-



IT was the typical summer amusement park. Up and down "the walk" there were barkers shouting their best; the merry-go-rounds were whirling to the wailing accompaniment of a callopie; and not far away a "tar-face," who spent his waking hours in urging the public to "hit th' niggah in th' eye an' git ah good seegar!" was dodging the balls of an inaccurate populace.

Walton looked around, with the frank, open smile that never failed to win him friends, and decided that there was nothing to interest him in this new "park." Then he remembered that he had not seen the chief attraction of the place, the real reason of his presence there—"Ziska, the Only Genuine Arabian Gypsy."

Turning, he followed the slow-moving, peanut-eating, gum-chewing crowd, past the Japanese stands, where slant-eyed little men ceaselessly rolled balls along polished grooves; past Madame Marda, only Seventh Daughter of a Seventh Daughter; past the "Sooz-elum" with the taffy stand; past the oyster stall and the quick-lunch place, until a turn in the walk brought him out upon soft sand, facing a large tent. No flags or ornaments broke its grayness, but an inscription ran all across the top—"The Princess Ziska." Instead of the usual barker, a tall, majestic Arab stalked before it, carrying a spear

and otherwise accoutered for the desert.

"Humph," grunted Walton, in genuine surprise; "looks like the real thing."

The fee was a dollar, but despite this high rate, the crowd fought for the privilege of paying it to the draped and hooded figure that awaited them just within. Cushions, heaped and piled around the sides, invited the curious to dispose themselves more or less gracefully, pending their call to revelation. A barefoot girl, anklets jingling, glorious eyes shining above a yashmak, served the blackest of coffee in tiny wooden cups. A stack of spears stood in one corner, leather water pouches and a camel's embroidered saddle in another. The tent, which was evidently a very large one, was divided into two parts by canvas, behind which the seeress was probably ensconced.

Walton, taking his little eup from the veiled lady, sniffed this convincingly mysterious and Oriental atmosphere with appreciation.

"Faked, of course," he decided, "but clever as the deuce."

A second muffled figure stood by the inner entrance, admitting the sitters in their order of entry. It was noteworthy that they went in frankly amused, and came out as frankly serious. Walton's desire to talk with the hidden dispenser of fate became acute, but he contrived, by shifting his place occasionally, to be the last, for he did

not want to be timed by the watch that he shrewdly suspected the guardian of the door held beneath the flowing robes. He was rewarded by seeing the Arab disappear somewhere in the rear, as he lifted the flap of the "princess'" door.

At first he could not make out much in the dim light, but as his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, he saw that there was evidently some sort of a couch at the back, and that beside it an iron lamp burned faintly. The light flickered through the arabesque pattern and showed the subtle beauty of the old prayer rug upon which it stood. The setting was excellent; for a faker, the Princess Ziska had a fine discrimination, to say the least. He had been standing by the door, waiting for her to appear, but now he saw a movement among the cushions of the couch, and that which he had taken for some tumbled drapery stretched out a small, delicate hand, brightened the light, and pulled a stool within its radius.

"Seet down, pleas'," said a very low, full voice. The light came up a little more, and Walton moved cautiously forward, and doubled his long legs under the low seat. The princess half sat, half lay upon the couch, in a pose of proud graciousness. Two long, thick braids of glistening black hair lay upon her shoulders, and were bound to her head by a slender silver fillet. She wore a thumb ring with silver chains that attached it to a bracelet of the argent metal, heavily studded with some dull blue stones. The Arabian sandals upon her bare feet were of a rare pattern, as was the material of her short skirt and little vest.

Walton had never been so disturbed in his life. The strangeness of the setting, the beauty of the woman, the pungent, faint odor of incense and sandalwood, and all the wrappings of the hour were alien to him; why, then, had he that sense of having returned—of being with familiar things? He knew that he ought to say something, but nothing would come to his tongue. What he wanted to do was to reach out and take that small, oddly ringed hand in his own.

As if divining his difficulty, the princess leaned toward him, holding out a platter of dark wood on which cigarettes were heaped. "You care to smoke w'ile we talk?" She slurred the end of her words oddly, but her speech was readily understood, and bore the intonation that spells refinement, the world over. Her face, warm and rosy in the light of the lamp, smiled at him.

"Oh—ah—thank you——" Walton murmured, and searched for his match box, conscious of marvelous, velvety-black eyes, of a crimson stain of mouth, spreading in luscious curves, and of a delicate nose, with wide, proud nostrils.

"Permeet me—*nod* t'e match, no!" The hand burdened with the bracelet proffered him a long taper, lit from the lamp, and the red mouth broke into an apologetic smile. "I am *nod* used to eet. I 'ave in my lamp bud t'e oil of my fadars, *nod* t'is stuff t'ad *smells*." Repugnance throbbled in her emphasized words, and Walton nodded in agreement. "Smells" were his particular abomination.

"I don't blame you—er—princess, but what's the matter with gas or electricity?"

"T'ey are oogly."

"Oh, come now—you could put a bulb inside that lamp——" He bent suddenly to examine it. Yes, it really was an antique; a hammered-brass affair, fretted and embossed, such as only the smiths of the desert can produce. The princess bent to look, too.

"You see, my frien', eet ees too ol'. No new kin' of t'ing shall censult eet."

Here's a find, said Walton's mind to him—an educated faker, playing the game with intelligence and real properties.

Suddenly he bent forward to look more keenly at the high cheek bones, the thin, arched nose, and the three-cornered eyes, brilliant and deep set; occasionally he had been fortunate enough to find that type on English heaths or in Spanish hills—— Could it be——

"*Can tute reneker Romany jib, miri rawnie?*" he asked breathlessly.

"*Can reneker Romany jib, miri nye,*

hatch da tan, port Romany chies o chals, o liel ma Gorgio at lushes."

And she drew from her sash a beautiful curved knife, and held it out, so that the light glinted along its wavering lines.

Walton held the perfect stillness of utter astonishment. She had given him the traditional Romany password, "I can talk Romany, raise the tent for the Romany boys and girls, and kill any stranger who meddles."

"Rene," he said, giving her the title of "lady," "how is it that you *dukkerin* in such a place as this? You, who are *kosko* Romany? Where is your *tan*?"

The princess held up her hand. "Sof'ly, my frien', sof'ly. You onderstan' all Romany jib?"

"No, just words and phrases. I have never heard it spoken in this country before. Tell me——"

"Wait a liddle—— W'y you wish know about me?"

"Why, because—— See here, I'll tell you. I write books—stories, you know, such as you sometimes read in newspapers——"

She interrupted him with an impatient gesture. "I know about t'ad. Yes."

"Well, I've wanted for a long time to write a book about the Romany people in this country, or in England; not just to tell about their talk and their ways, you know, but a story, a tale—just to make it up, only with details——" He floundered, uncertain of how much she understood.

"You 'ave said t'is before," she quietly reminded him. "I know. Go forwar'."

The thin edge of command lay upon her tone, and he had no time to wonder how she knew so well what he wished to convey. "Well, and so I have hunted the Romanys everywhere, and only a few times found some old *dye* who could tell me words or about the traditions—er—the old tales, you know."

Her repeated and assured "I know" checked him for a moment.

"You know a lot," he told her, bending gray-blue eyes upon her sharply,

but she bore this without a change of feature, and he "went forward."

"And so I have always investigated any gypsy that I came across, and I have hunted for them through England and Spain. That was why I came out here to-day—just on a chance that I might find——"

He stopped, confused by the sudden warmth in his heart. "Where is your *tan*?" he questioned her. If she were really a gypsy queen, she should have been surrounded by her tribe, shielded from care, tended and secluded as few "Gorgios" are.

"My tent is dark," she told him in Romany, holding out the hilt of her knife to him, and he knew that she meant that not one of her tribe was left alive, and that she offered the knife for him to touch in sign of friendship to the head of a house, as is the gypsy custom.

He leaned forward and tapped it with his two first fingers. "*A shuee a re*," he murmured, crossing his fingers as he did so.

"*A shule a patteredeen*," she replied, touching her right knuckles to his.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Walton. "You're the first outside of Spain who could understand that. You do, don't you?"

"Oh, yes. To t'e leaf an' to t'e sun."

"To the moon and to the leaves."

"Yes, t'ad ees right. W'o tol' you, my frien'?"

"A very old *dye* in Spain. She said it would make me free of any Romany pot, but I have seldom found any who understood it."

"No, eet ees nod give' to many. I 'ave nod heard eet in long years." She absently plaited and twisted the great roll of hair that hung over her arm, and looked into some sad vista of her own. He felt her mood as clearly as if it had been his own, and he found himself smoking silently, shaken out of every accustomed thought, trembling with an emotion that defied analysis.

"You understand English very well," he said, in a quick recoil against the palpitating atmosphere.

"I onderstan' many languages. Eet

ees my gif', but to spek t'em, I do nod so well."

"Are you really an Arabian?"

"Only pardly— T'ad ees to mek t'e talk." She shrugged her shoulders deprecatingly. "Bud I knoah t'ad coun-tree ver' well."

"Tell me of yourself. How is it that you *dukkerin*?"

"I mus' eat, my frien'!"

She arose, and Walton felt that he was about to be dismissed.

"Must I go—yet?" he asked her.

She returned his look steadily, and he was conscious of being drawn down—down into the dark, warm depths of her eyes.

"Look oud," she said at last, suddenly moving a little, "an' see eef more waid for me. Eef nod—I will spek wit' you a liddle longer."

He looked out, saw the entrance room dark, and returned to her, sat down again, lit a cigarette, watched her do the same, and had no wish to speak. For the moment his whirling thoughts were still, and he was content just to watch her.

She began to talk, after a little. It was not much that she would tell him of herself, but she bubbled over with quaint comments on the various nationalities she had known, and with the sly, dry humor which is characteristic of the Romany mind. Once or twice she startled him by a biting, caustically good-natured remark so like himself that they might have been quotations. He found himself agreeing with her, nodding assent to her swift characterizations, meeting her on common ground in love of art and distaste for affectations.

When he again pressed her for her own life, she gave him the merest outlines. Her own tent being "dark," she had been adopted into the English "Lees," one of the richest and most cultured of English gypsies, by the oldest dye, or mother, of the tribe. When the old woman died, some years afterward, her daughter had taken charge of Ziska, had married an Arabian gypsy whom they had met in Port Said, and had taken the girl with her to Arabia. From

there, they had wandered afar, finally coming to America for the Jamestown Fair. The woman, who had been like a sister to her, had died there, and she and the disconsolate man remained, with two faithful helpers whom they had picked up on their first landing in New York.

"And now," she concluded, "I am alone, always alone."

"Ziska," he said, very low, "don't tell me that no one has ever—loved you. There must have been plenty of—"

He stopped, checked by the outflung hand, which pointed sternly to the door.

"Good night," said Ziska, sinking back upon her pillows.

He stood, irresolute, turning his hat around and around, but no words would come, and finally he stumbled out, and fell upon a belated trolley car.

The motorman and the conductor exchanged knowing glances over his bowed head, and chuckled as he lurched uncertainly with the motion of the car. In truth, he was drunk, but not with an ordinary beverage. When a man has lived to full maturity without a sip from love's beaker, a full draft is apt to prove heady.

All that Walton could think of was two dark pools in which he found himself sinking—all that he could feel was the burning ache of his arms, where fancy teasingly showed him rounded shoulders and a small head, heavy with dark hair. In vain he remembered that many Romanys are beautiful by a dim light, and only by a dim light. Generations of prudent, conservative, narrow-minded Waltons stirred in his blood, and helped his mind to scorn his subjection. He had never been the sort of man to feel the lure of women—to them he had often been kind, but never ardent—and by the end of the long ride he had begun to hope that daylight would dissipate the spell, and determined that he would see the sun upon Ziska's dark head and find peace.

Pursuant to that belief, he went out to the park on the following afternoon, so fevered and physically unfit that he looked ten years older than he had the

night before. The tent was empty when he arrived, as it was the dinner hour. From six to seven, up and down "the walk," cries are stilled and the calliope is silent, and feet cease to pound, and the odor of steak and onions is on the air. Knowing this, Walton walked through the outer room, and the dinner inner one, to where he saw a ray of sunshine, confident that he would find Ziska deep in some greasy dish, for the Romany is not a dainty eater. For a moment, just one moment, before he lifted the flap, he looked back at the couch, and the rug, and the black lamp, now unlit, and in that moment he bade good-by to the most wonderful thing he had ever known. Then he passed out, rather a bitter smile on his lips.

The Arab and two commonplace women—they addressed each other as Mary and Dolly—sat at a rude table under a tree, for the back of the concession gave directly upon the wooded banks of the river. On the other side of the table, her face toward the shining stream, sat Ziska, in an attitude eloquent of weariness and sadness.

"No, I t'ank you, Maree," she said, to one of the women, a little, round, good-natured thing, who coaxingly held a platter of steaming meat toward her, "eet ees too 'ot fer t'e mead. I will 'ave rice an' t'e berry."

The long plaits of her hair glistened, blue-black, in the sun; her white silk undervest was spotless; her skin glowed with that radiance which only exquisite cleanliness can give it, and the arm that was thrown over the back of her chair ended in as dainty and perfectly kept a hand as he had ever seen. He looked and looked, aware of some crucial moment, of t'ie strengthening of bonds he had thought to break. Automatically, he moved toward her, and she looked up.

"You!" she said.

He walked around the end of the table and sat down beside her. The brilliant, smoldering eyes sank, and then rose daringly upon him, braving the look from the dark-ringed blue eyes.

"I—wanted to see you," he heard himself saying hoarsely.

Her smile welcomed him, forgave him, and provoked him, all in one dazzling flash before she spoke.

"You weel eat wit' us, my frien'? Maree, 'ave you nod t'e 'ot rice?"

"Maree" handed him a bowl of the snow-white grains and a quaint platter of strawberries. On the other side of the table steak, and potatoes, and vegetables steamed, but Ziska did not offer them to him, and an odd kind of pride filled him at this subtle confidence that his taste would be like her own. The act of eating with her, in this simple, natural way, seemed to restore him to calmness, and he listened with a good deal of amusement to the exceedingly slangy talk of "Maree," and to the grunts with which the other woman—whom he had, with difficulty, identified as the veiled lady—answered. The Arab ate with his fingers, without lifting his eyes, and Ziska hummed a little tune as she nibbled at the berries. The tension that had lain upon him relaxed a little; he felt that he could smile at his infatuation—that he might take it lightly.

"W'at ees t'e lil?" inquired Ziska, drawing a worn volume from the pocket in his coat. "Oh, eet ees Hor-acc. That is mos' puro lil."

"Yes," he answered, "it is, indeed, an old book, but one that never loses its charm for me."

"Me—— I lak' Dante better."

"You are a wonderful person, Ziska. When you know that I am a *kosko* Gorgio, maybe you will tell me where you learned all this, *miri tawn juva*."

"I am nod a *tawn juva*, my 'frien', an' my nam' ees Ziska. *Shoon tu?*"

He bowed his head to the rebuke, thankful that the others did not understand, for his face was burning. "*Tawn juva*," in gypsy talk, means "little girl," and, as in English, may be a familiarity or a caress. He had uttered it with too much of both in his tone, and with swift retrospect he saw that some sinister feeling had underlain it. The "Hear thou!" with which she had ended, and the stern look that she had given him, showed that she had felt that and resented it. He felt humbled and

chastened, but her ability to tie his tongue persisted, and all he could do was to hold out his hand supplicatingly to her. The dumb apology Ziska took in her usual grave manner, and, as she laid her firm, steady hand in his, Walton knew that any unworthy thought he had had of her was gone forever.

"Ziska," said the woman addressed as Mary, beginning to clear away the dishes when the meal was finished, "it ain't time yet for you t' come on. I'll go get into my rig; you set still and get some air. You stayin' for a while, Mr. Walton?"

"I—yes—Ziska, wouldn't you like to take a walk down by the river after the show? There's a full moon, you know, and it's as light as day."

"That'll be fine, Ziska," cried Mary. "She's always a-wantin' to go out at night, Mr. Walton, but she's too pretty a girl to go traipsin' around by herself, an' the rest of us is jest too done up to go with her."

"Me, I am travel far wit' my prettiness," said Ziska, "an' always I 'ave my frien' wit' me." She lightly touched the knife, stuck in her girdle.

"Ugh!" shuddered Mary. "I can't abide to see you handle that thing. An' anyway, while I can look after you, you ain't a-goin' to use no knife!" and with this ultimatum she departed, carrying the silent Dollie with her. Ziska looked after them with a beautiful smile.

"Tey are my good frien's," she told Walton, "always mos' kind." She drew her chair back against the tree, and laid her head against its rough bark. "Now I t'ink I res' a liddle," she murmured, and closed drowsy, dewy eyes upon him.

Walton sat where he was, watching her; where were the faded lines, the sensuousness, the dirt, and the vulgarity that he had dreaded to see? He acknowledged that he had never seen a purer, finer face. Yet—tradition and custom and class and habit were all against her, and they were strong. Again he felt the ache of empty arms, but he smoked quietly on, and only the darkening of the shadows beneath his eyes told the tale.

Presently she stirred, drew a long sigh, and smiled up at him.

"I mus' 'ave slep'," she said, and rose to go in.

"Ziska——" he said.

She turned to him with the smile that he was beginning to know for his own, a grave, sweet, confident look that turned some cord of feeling in his heart almost beyond endurance.

"I will wait here for you. How soon will you be through?"

"Een two hours. I cannod work more ad one tim'."

"Will you come, then?"

"Yes."

The low, vibrating assent quivered through him, and he made an impetuous step toward her, but with another smile, of dazzling, flashing joy this time, she was gone.

The hum of voices and the pad of feet on "the walk" in front of the concessions grew; but, wrapped in a mantle of pain and indecision, he wore a path between the trees, and heard only the roar of his own battle. High above all the other noises, a "spieler" for a side show rendered a popular song:

"Al-ice, whereart thou go-wing?

Where shall we spend the day?

Al-ice, we'll make a deadswell sho-wing

If it takes myw-h-o-l-e weekspay.

My coin was made forblo-wing,

Gir-lie, it's upto you,

Sailor rideor roam thesands,

Or sitand listentothebands.

Al-ice, whereart thou go-wing?"

Automatically, Walton's mind recorded the absurd performance, but his consciousness knew nothing of it.

"Al-ice, whereart thou go-wing?"

strenuously inquired the singer.

"Where shall we spend the day?"

continued Walton. "Good God, what am I going to do?"

At the end of an hour Mary came out to him.

"Jes' for a breath of air," she explained; "there's a noodlebox of a Johnny havin' a special readin' of fifteen minutes, and I left Dollie to hold the watch on him. Say, what's th' mat-

ter with you, Mr. Walton? Dassin't you set down?"

"I—I'm restless. Say—er—Mary, I suppose—Ziska's—really a gypsy, eh?"

"I dunno. She's a furriner of some kind. She's a mighty nice girl. You're the first feller I ever saw her talkin' to, outside the tent."

Hands deep in his pockets, he stood, absorbed in thought, and after a shrewd glance at him, Mary stole away and left him to take up his problem again.

At the end of the two hours he had fought it out, and he wished, with all his soul, that he had not promised to wait for Ziska. He thought of not doing it, but while he was considering that, she came out, wearily stretching her magnificent body to its full height.

"I am mos' tired," she told him, as she came closer and stood beside him.

"You must be, indeed," he replied. "Two hours is a long time to sit still, and it must be very tiring to talk to so many people, in such quick succession."

He had rehearsed that speech, warned by the many times that he had found himself dumb, but he had not counted on his voice sounding so frigid. Ziska wheeled sharply and looked into his face. Under the crown of her hair, her eyes gleamed unnaturally. Just for a second she stood so, then drew herself hurriedly away, and, without a word, turned toward the river path.

He followed her sure, firm feet, but in the dark beneath the trees he stumbled over vines and roots, and fell off the trail into tangles of briars. Once or twice the expletives of an irritated and exasperated man escaped him, but Ziska went lightly on.

Groping after her, and feeling his own clumsiness acutely, he marveled at her sureness, and was thankful for it, too; this tigerlike tracing of dark ways put her farther from him, reared the wall of caste higher. He sighed deeply and stumbled on, stupid with pain.

They had reached the water's edge. She turned to him, looked piercingly at him, he thought, and took a step backward, toward the gloom of the trees.

"Good-by, my frien'," she said. "Dó no.d come—again—I v'll hol' you in

my heart—forever—bud now—eet ees—good-by!" And with a quick movement of her lithe body she disappeared among the trees.

He let her go. He suffered horribly, but reason told him that it was the best way. Then, somewhere, a pitiful, strangled sob sounded, and reason's voice was drowned. All that he thought he had conquered rose up and took him by the throat, and he tore breathlessly after the sound, falling in the darkness, calling her name, turning, doubling on his tracks, tearing his clothes, swamped by a flood of all the primitive passions of man. He hunted for her desperately, blindly, as wounded men do for water, and nothing but sheer exhaustion brought him to a stop; he threw himself to the ground and let the earth hide the hard-wrung tears of manhood.

"I'll go home," he told himself, at last, and back of that lay the thought that it was all over; reason had conquered again, but had left a heart squeezed dry.

The cold wind of early morning had sprung up. He shivered in it, and turned up the path.

He was almost at the top when he heard low voices, and the next step brought him upon a group whose meaning stunned him. Ziska lay on the ground, with half-closed eyes, while a policeman anxiously examined her, and another held by the collar a dirty, sodden man who nursed his bleeding hands and cursed.

"What on earth——" he burst out.

"Are you Mr. Walton?" inquired the officer who was standing; "the man who was out with this young woman?"

"That's my name. How——"

"We was sent out to look you two up; seems there was inquiries, as you'd bin gone nearly all night. Where was you when this happened?"

"I don't know—I mean—I wasn't with her." He knelt down and took her head in his arms. "How—what happened?" he said thickly.

"We don't know. We jes' come across her, after we'd caught this fellow running through the woods."

"Go for a doctor," said Walton. "I'll—I'll stay with her."

Vaguely, as in a dream, he heard them say something about the ambulance, and then they went away, dragging the wretched man with them.

When their footsteps had quite died away, Walton took her gently in his arms and turned deliberately down the path again.

He knew what he was about to do; and he was glad to feel that he had been in time to do it.

Halfway down he stopped to press a long, full kiss upon her undenyng lips; he smiled a little then, and went on, holding her cheek softly against his own. At the bank he laid her down while he drew off his shoes and removed his coat. He did not wish to go down too soon. Then he took her up and waded out, and finally began to swim with one lean, hard arm, holding her up with the other.

So swimming, he found his mind astonishingly clear. Never had he felt so sure of himself, so contained and at peace. What! Live on, a dull clod, bestially filling an empty heart and soul upon the husks of life? Offer no blood sacrifice for blood spilled, for love derided and denied? Alien blood! He had known her for his own woman at the first glance, and he had let her go, glad to feel his paltry little caste mark undefiled upon his brow.

The water began to feel cold, and his strokes lessened. He drew her around in front of him that he might have one more look before he went down.

That came near to being the last of him, indeed, for the shock of her opened and conscious eyes stunned him, and he felt the river roll over his head, but he came up, trod water for a moment, and turned resolutely back.

He has no recollection of the return trip. Untold cycles of time sped by. Then some one said:

"Land o' Goshen, did ye ever see a body so stubborn? Takin' his own blessed time to come to, he is."

He moved his head slightly. "Not stubborn—tired—so tired!" he managed to stammer, but for the life of

him could not open his eyes. "What——" Things slipped away again. Another cycle. He came laboriously out of the depths and identified himself and the voice: "Course he'll come to. I'm gettin' th' water out of him. You didn't ship half so much."

"He must have held me up." An unknown voice, this, with haunting cadences. He caught a glimpse of swaying trees and rushing clouds, and sank away, but almost instantly heard the dialogue running on:

"Sure he held you up, but he come pretty feeble at the end, I c'n tell ye."

"I cannot understand how we got out there, at all. The last thing I remember was when that man kicked me. It knocked the breath right out of me."

"Should think it would; wisht I could get my hands on him!"

"Did I hurt him much? He snatched at my ring, and I cut his hands, I know, but after that——"

"He bled considerable. Say, you know he's batty on you, don't you?"

The ghost of a laugh shivered out. "After I'd cut his hand off?"

"Aw, you know who I mean well's I do. Bet you a dollar he thought you was dead, and was goin' to drown himself."

"No!"

"Bet ye. You ain't told him, have ye?"

"No. I—we—he——"

"Huh—you, it, she, him, and they. They's all pronouns—I know. Remember that much o' my schoolin', anyway. Hello, got your eyes open, have ye?" Another whack with a wet petticoat on his bared chest helped him to sit up. "Steady now. Feel better?"

"Yes, thanks—I—Mary, who is that—behind me—talking?"

"Who is it?"

"Yes—— I want to see—her."

His doubt and distress were so great that Mary's mocking eyes softened tenderly.

"It's only Ziska. You lay down."

"Ziska?"

"Sure. She's got a rib stove in where that fe'la kicked her. I go, her

comfortable till the doctor gets here. I sent the cops fer a stretcher."

He staggered up, backed by Mary's firm little arm, and looked, half disbelieving. She lay on the ground, bolstered up with Mary's skirt, very white, but clear of eye.

"I didn't know it was you," he said. He took her in, in a wide, hungry look, then walked unsteadily over and knelt beside her. Her vest had slipped low on one shoulder, revealing a line where brown abruptly gave place to cream, and he traced the line, wonderingly, with his fingers; no sunburn ever left so sharp a demarkation.

"Why—you—you aren't——"

"No, I'm not a gypsy."

"You talk—you can talk as well—that's what puzzled me when I heard you——"

"That is why I talked. I wanted you to hear." Her eyes dwelt on him, full and grave, as always, but now dumbly seeking, asking, waiting for something from him. He wondered what it could be, but he could not think much about it. All he knew was that he had snatched from death that which made him a man, and he looked down musingly upon the beauty that was swallowed up in dear familiarity.

"Don't you want to know who I really am?" she asked.

"You are Ziska."

"All that I told you about living for so many years with the gypsies is true."

"Of course."

"My real name is Virginia Lee."

"I like Ziska better. Tell me, how much are you hurt?"

"Listen. My mother and father both died when I was very little. My father was John Lee, of Cornwall."

"What!" he cried, startled out of his lethargy; "not *the* John Lee? The painter?"

"Yes; but then he was not famous. I can remember his selling his pictures

for a few shillings. And when he was gone, I was sent to an orphan asylum, and one day the gypsies, the gypsy Lees, came to the kitchen door to sell baskets. The old *dye* was startled when she saw me."

"By your looks?"

"Yes. I had to put some color on my skin, but my features——"

"Yes, yes—I know. And she took you away?"

"She stole me away. She was a wonderful woman. She taught me to *dukkerin*, but I had always felt things——"

"And your name was the same——"

"My father told me there had always been a story that we were partly Roman, but he thought it just an old tale. Anyway, there has often been a girl or a boy in our family that looked—that way——"

"Are you suffering now?"

"No, very little. *Miri dye* was very good to me, and I liked the life—until I grew older. But then I had learned to talk as easily with the accent as without it, and I did not know what else to do."

"*Tawen juva! Miri tawen juva*—I may call you that now?"

"If you still wish to."

"You know."

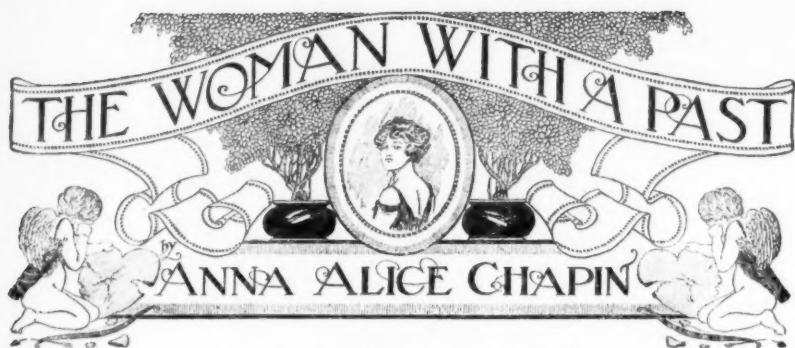
"I was so proud—— I wanted to have you care—without knowing——"

"I did. I found that out, when I thought you were dead. I didn't want to live."

He saw her face transfigured with that glory which a man sees but once on the face of a woman—when she first gives herself to him; and he drank deep of that Shekinah before he shut his eyes and bent his head.

"Don't mind me," said Mary, from a discreet distance. "I'm busy. I'm figurin' out where I'll get a noo job at short notice."





V.—A MOMENT'S HALT

Day, my holiday, if thou ill-uest
Me, who am only Pippa—old year's sorrow,
Cast off last night, will come again to-morrow.
—Pippa Passes.

PHILIPPA CARPENTER stepped out upon the back platform of the observation car, and looked about her as if upon a new world. They were crossing the Sierra Madres, and just dropping into the golden valley of California. All the day before they had hurtled through the strange and lonely mesa lands of Utah and Nevada, where sand and scrub rolled in an ugly travesty of the sea, and cactilike hobgoblins and horned demons stood out grotesquely against a dull sky. Pippa had felt as if she were passing through some strange troll country in a German fairy tale. Surely in such a world as this were the terrible kobold women, and the werewolves that hunt in the dark of the moon.

Then, in the dawning, she had lifted the shade in her stateroom and looked out upon rolling mountain reaches and shifting miles of mist, and a sort of uplift had come to her. For she was of those who receive impressions with almost magical speed and certainty. In all her travels she was forever rocked by the mood of the place. Perhaps that was why she had kept young so long. However intense her own mental and emotional occupation, she was never too

absorbed in it to lose the thrill, and wonder, and interest of the highroad. Her purple-gray eyes, deep filled with the wine of much living, and suffering, and enjoying, were always on the lookout for that gay and rakish blade Adventure as he chanced to ride by. And she could meet him in the oddest places and glimpse his laughing eyes and shining sword where no one else ever suspected his presence.

It was in vague pursuit of him that she had turned her face toward the Pacific coast. She had unrest in her blood, and, moreover, she had had more than a due share of grief and disappointment of late; she must take wing again. And she had never seen the Pacific.

With the full flood of morning, the last sheets of mist had been torn away, and clung in shreds to the mountain peaks above. With the mist gone, a sky so blue as to make one gasp was unrolled. And, from a land of dry white sand, and stubble, and cacti, the world had become a garden. Gay green covered the mountainside, deepening and brightening to a tropical richness as it extended down the valley. And the fragrance! *What* was it? Pippa closed her eyes and breathed it in. She was,

like most emotional people, intensely susceptible to scents. Then it came to her that it was the perfume of millions of orange trees borne up the valley like incense!

The banks on either side of the train showed flowers new and strange to her—splashes of pinkish mauve and deep blue. Higher up, were flowering shrubs and trees as dark as pines, yet unlike them. She had never seen the eucalyptus before, and, in viewing its rich contrast against the other trees, it occurred to her that in California the greens alone made a color scheme well-nigh as varied as the spectrum.

A grimy brakeman passed her, muttering picturesque oaths, and she called to him: "Why are we stopping so long?"

"Washout," he rejoined laconically; and then something in the charming face looking down at him made him smile unwillingly, and add: "Say, lady, if you think you'll get into Los Angeles in time for breakfast, you've got another guess coming. We're likely to be here a couple of hours or more!"

He passed on, and Pippa realized, with a pang of hunger, that there was no diner on the train. She went back into the car, and learned from the porter that the brakeman's ill tidings had been only too well grounded. Though only half an hour out of San Bernardino, they were likely to be stalled for two long, hungry hours. Pippa pinned on her hat and climbed out of the car. Somewhere, somehow, she was going to get some breakfast. Besides—what a wonderful morning it was! She had never outgrown the fleeting moods wherein the joy of life pulses unreasoningly. To-day the past and its dark places were lost—charmed away by the smell of the orange trees and the rapacious blue sky of California.

They were halted just on the edge of the valley, which is veritably all one great garden. The big orange groves and important ranches were farther down, below San Bernardino, but already there were small farms and tiny clusters of orange trees. Pippa gasped with the wonder of that scent which as-

sails one's senses like the fumes of a divine anæsthetic. The oranges lay about the roots of the trees like heaps of red gold, and hung like tiny suns on the green branches, and all the while there were the masses of blossoms, too.

"Oh, brave little trees," Pippa whispered, half aloud, "to bloom and bear fruit both at once!"

She climbed a bank all sweet and wet with dew, and laughed with delight at her first glimpse of the California poppies—golden-yellow and white. Was everything white and gold here in this miraculous country?

Through trees she went, and the railway tracks and train passed from view, and she was wandering in a country of romance and impossible adventure, where at any moment Pan might pipe from behind a bush, or a wood nymph come to talk to her.

She had an odd little trick of talking to herself, born of a great inherent loneliness—a loneliness that companionship had never been able entirely to dispel. So, as she walked on the dew-wet, poppy-stained grass, and breathed the gusts of orange-flower perfume—now near and overpowering, now seeming to fade into the fresh, unscented wind—she found herself repeating the words of the Persian who understood gardens no less than human hearts:

*"A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of Being from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd
The Nothing it set out from—"*

This was a moment's halt in her strange and restless life—a moment filled with silent music and a glamour that made her feel a girl again.

Suddenly she found herself standing before a little weather-beaten house.

"Why, it's just like a fairy tale!" she exclaimed delightedly.

The little house was buried in roses and hedged about with geraniums six feet tall. Those miraculous flowers of the Golden West had never met Pippa's sight before, and they added to the impossible, fairylike impression of the moment.

There was an odorous mass of branching heliotrope growing over the

door like a vine, and red roses that had climbed an oak tree and starred its branches with blossoms.

"It's like a symbol," thought Pippa vaguely; "but I don't know just what it's a symbol of!"

Holding her purple gown daintily from the dew, she stepped boldly forward and rapped at the door.

She almost expected a witch with a pointed hat and a stick to open it; but instead came a small, gentle old woman with dark eyes, soft hair as white as silver, and a look both wistful and wise.

She stared at her visitor with open wonder. Probably in all her life she had never seen anything so radiant as Philippa Carpenter, with her red hair and flower-white face, dressed in a gown that matched her eyes.

"Good morning," said Mrs. Carpenter, smiling. "I'm most frightfully hungry, and I'm going to beg for a glass of milk!"

For she knew as soon as she looked at the little old woman that she must beg, and not offer to buy.

The little woman seemed to recover herself with a start.

"But, certainly," she said, speaking with a soft French accent, and opening the door wide. "Will madame enter?"

Inside, everything was neat and exquisitely clean, though simple and primitive to bareness. The pots and pans on the walls were of copper, and shone like dark gold. The shelves held quaint old earthenware dishes of brown, and white, and blue.

Philippa, who had seen Norman and Breton peasant cottages, felt a quick sense of familiarity. She spoke to the old woman in French, and a glow came into the wise, dark eyes—a glow that was still veiled with a wistfulness that seemed a component part of the Frenchwoman's being.

"Vous êtes très bien ici, madame."

"Merci, madame; nous sommes tranquilles, voyons."

She left the room for a moment and returned with a brimming cup of milk and a plate of *brioques*.

"I have not tasted anything so delicious since I left France," Pippa as-

sured her. The little, wistful old face flushed faintly with pride and pleasure.

"*Henri, viens-toi!*" she called softly, and a tremulous old voice answered immediately:

"Bien, Hélène!"

He came in promptly with something of Gallic impulse about him, in spite of a great weight of years and a stick that he leaned upon. He was a bright-eyed French peasant, clean and brown, with a ready smile on his wrinkled face, and a ready courtesy. The two of them made Philippa welcome exquisitely, plied her with the simple fare, and circled her about with that sense of gracious welcome and unaffected compliment which the Latin races can so warmly and delicately convey. All three talked happily in French, and Philippa could almost have dreamed herself back in one of her beloved country villages of France. And all about was the scent of the orange trees, and a glamour like that of a fairy tale.

It was quite suddenly that the interruption came. Philippa, speaking a trifle more loudly than usual, was astounded to hear a movement and a cry in the next room. The old couple, paling and trembling, met each other's eyes, and the woman hurried from the room.

"What is it?" asked Pippa, in a startled whisper. A vague sense of terror was creeping over her, clouding the fanciful, gay mood of the early morning.

"Madame," said the old peasant huskily, "it is our son—our one boy. He had a terrible accident a few years ago that struck him blind—he—an artist!"

He bowed his head, while his face worked. Pippa felt her own throat contract in pity.

"His mind and body were hurt, too," proceeded the father brokenly. "He is at all times patient and uncomplaining, but he grieves so bitterly that it is tearing his life away in handfuls. He—he cannot live long, madame!"

"It is his lost sight—his lost art that he grieves for?" asked Pippa softly. It seemed to her that she could hear a low

pitiful sound of voices in the room beyond.

"That, madame, and—a woman. A woman he knew many years ago in France. We know little of her, his mother and I, but she must have been—sweet and tender."

Pippa nearly cried at the gentle intonation of the old man's "*douce et tendre*." The next moment the mother had entered the room. She went straight to Pippa.

"Madame," she said, "you know of our—son?"

Pippa nodded silently.

"His mind is not broken," said the old woman proudly; "but it has been hurt by much pain and endurance. He thinks—madame, forgive me—but he thinks that you are one whom he knew long ago, and has longed to hear news of for many years."

"But—impossible—" began Pippa, bewildered.

The mother raised a rough but slender hand in interruption.

"*Sans doute, madame*—it is, indeed, impossible. But since it is his dream— Oh, madame"—her sober little air of dignity broke suddenly—"madame, it is as if *le bon Dieu* had sent you to us. Will you not go in to our poor boy and speak to him? It will be but a few moments, and it can do you no harm. Let him believe that you are, indeed, his lost Désirée."

In silence, Pippa rose and followed the old woman into the inner room.

In a great chair near the open window sat a man; a man with prematurely white hair and eyes in which the tragic anxiety of the blind burned always like a devouring flame, a flame without light.

"Speak to him," whispered the old Frenchwoman. "His name is Gervais."

"Gervais!" said Pippa. It seemed to her that she had only breathed the name, but the man in the chair started violently, and stretched out his arms toward her. She saw now that he was thin to emaciation, but bore the sharp, clear lines of what must have been rare beauty in the past.

"Her voice!" he gasped. "Hers!"

"Whose voice, *mon petit*?" came from the mother softly.

"Her's—Désirée's! I knew she would come back!"

The older woman looked at Pippa, whose face was colorless. Mother love and watchfulness that bordered on suspicion looked from the dark, wise eyes. Pippa forced herself to meet them.

"It seems almost as if you must have met my son before," said the mother. "You are a very great actress, madame."

"Désirée," said the blind man, with arms reaching toward her, "Désirée—the well-desired! Have you come to me after all these years?"

She went quietly forward and knelt beside him. Then she bent her head and laid her cheek against one of the reaching, yearning hands.

"I am here," she said in French, and drew the pins from her hat, letting it fall on the floor. The man smiled as he touched her hair.

"Are you still—beautiful, Désirée?" he whispered.

She did not answer. The old woman stood quietly in a corner and watched them. Through the open window came a boisterous flurry of wind heavy with the scent of orange flowers.

"Do you remember the days when I first christened you Désirée? Not because your own dear name was not sweet enough, but because I wanted one all for myself. And though I could paint many things, and dreamed then of becoming a great artist, it was always you whom I wanted to paint—you, just you—in a hundred ways! With your splendid hair loose about you, or kneeling in prayer, or laughing, with your arms full of flowers—always you! Do you remember?"

"Yes." She hardly breathed the words.

"Do you remember the queer old studio, and the brazier we used to cook over? And the kettle that always boiled over?"

"I remember—all."

"And the quaint little market booths

along the Seine—belovéd, you remember?"

"Yes." Her face was colorless.

"And the print shop—and old Père Guillaume—and the woman who sold us artichokes, and was just like some one out of '*Ventre de Paris*'?"

"Yes," again.

"*Bien-aimée*, there are so many things to remember! There was a dawning when we looked from the window—the *sixième étage*, wasn't it?—and saw the mist on the river, and the *Sacre Coeur* far away, flushed in the light of sunrise, like a prayer above Montmartre. *Rappelles-toi?* I kissed you, Désirée, and said '*Forever!*'"

It seemed as if the woman beside him would fall, but she did not. Perhaps it was the gaze of the other woman who had borne him that kept her steadfast. Raising her own tired, purple-gray eyes, she met those other wise and anxious ones, and nodded. The mother seemed unaccountably and vaguely reassured. The man in the big chair reached out once more, tremulously, feverishly, for Pippa's hand, and she gave it to him—slim, and smooth, and exquisite to touch.

"*Bien-aimée*," he whispered, "there is yet more to remember. Ah, I have not forgotten the Golden World, though I cannot see it any longer. There was Ville d'Avray, with the gray-green Corot trees, and you sat, with one glint of sunlight on your red hair, beside the lake; and your dear arms were bare—I knelt beside you and kissed them from the wrists to the soft curve within the elbow—Oh, Désirée—the Desired One! You have not forgotten?"

"I have forgotten—nothing."

"Désirée—there is something I have to ask you—something I have to know, now that I have you with me again for a moment."

A moment! Even he recognized that it was a moment only, a moment's halt in the busy onward surge of the days! Somewhere in the distance it seemed to Pippa that she could hear the sound of an engine's whistle. But for the one moment she seemed in a place remote and out of key with trains and pre-

ticalities. The blind man's hand lay on her hair, and the orange flowers sent their magical breath upon the wind.

"Then—in the old days," said Gervais, speaking softly, "I had only one fear; I knew that some time we would part, that so exquisite and fresh a poem as ours could not last forever— Yes, I knew it, Désirée, even as I kissed the word '*Forever*' into your lips— And I feared—what do you think, *bien-aimée*? My own loneliness, my own desolation? No—something more terrible than all these—I feared that you, with your great heart, and your great spirit, and your generous warmth, would fall on evil places, and instead of going upward to the light, would go down into darkness. Forgive me, belovéd, if I have wronged you, doubted you. But all these years I have waited to know if you are happy, and—good."

An indescribable inflection made the simple word a thing of music.

The clean, bare little room whirled for a moment, and a crew of strange ghosts came out, mocking, from the corners. But once again the sweet old eyes of the gray-haired mother cleared the mists. And Pippa, feeling certain rings upon her finger heavier than ever ball and chain could be to a convict, answered steadily:

"I am happy—and I am—good. I have gone up into the light, not down into the darkness. I have fallen on no evil days. There is nothing for you to grieve about, Gervais—nothing—nothing!"

A light came into his face, and his arms sank back. The merciful lids, closing, shut out the painful agony of his sightless eyes.

"Kiss me good-by, Désirée," he murmured. And she did so, gently, as one might kiss the dead. He seemed to have fainted, he was so still; and, feeling her way, Pippa walked slowly out of the room.

The little old Frenchwoman followed noiselessly with her hat. As Pippa pinned it on, she heard the locomotive again, clearly this time, calling the passengers back to the train. The moment's halt was over.

"You are worn out with the strain, madame," said the gentle old woman.

"It was a task the most exacting," added the old man. "Madame has been an angel of sweetness!"

"If our boy dies, madame——" said the mother, with a dropped inflexion.

Her husband straightened up. "When our boy dies, *Hélène*," he said resolutely. "*Le bon Dieu* will not spare him to us; it is not to be."

"He will, at least," said the gentle old lady, "have died with the happiness blooming in his heart. He will

have been reassured—strengthened—— Madame, are you ill—or faint?"

Pippa looked at her; for an instant she swayed slightly.

"It was all true," she said tonelessly.

"It was I—I—— He used to call me—*Désirée*!"

She went out blindly and began walking slowly, haltingly, toward the train which was sending forth sharp and peremptory signals.

All about her was the scent of the orange groves and the glamour of a day long dead.



A VAGABOND THOUGHT

SINCE early this morning the world has seemed surging
With unworded rhythm, and rhyme without thought.

It may be the Muses take this way of urging

The patience and pains by which poems are wrought.

It may be some singer who passed into glory,

With songs all unfinished, is lingering near

And trying to tell me the rest of the story,

Which I am too dull of perception to hear.

I hear not, I see not; but feel the sweet swinging

And swaying of meter, in sunlight and shade,

The still arch of Space, with such music is ringing

As never an audible orchestra made.

The moments glide by me, and each one is dancing;

Aquiver with life is each leaf on the tree,

And out on the ocean is movement entrancing.

As billow with billow goes racing with glee.

With never a thought that is worthy the saying,

And never a theme to be put into song.

Since early this morning, my mind has been straying.

A vagabond thing, with a vagabond throng.

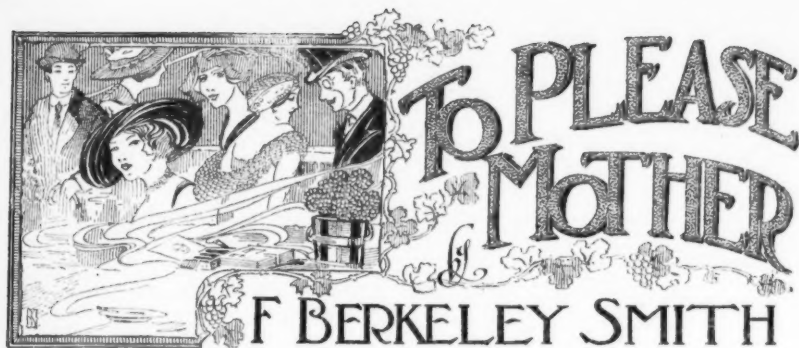
With gay, idle moments, and waves of the ocean,

With winds and with sunbeams, and treetops and birds,

It has lilted along in the joy of mere motion.

To songs without music, and verse without words.

ELLA WHEELER WILCON.



THAT Marjorie Dale and her mother were in Paris, Ricky Lee discovered upon entering his bachelor apartment on the Avenue du Bois, one September morning at four o'clock, that pale, reproachful hour just before the respectable little sparrows, nestled beneath the eaves, have begun to chirp.

Let it be said in the beginning that Ricky Lee was not yet fully grown, though he considered himself a widely experienced young man of the world. Ricky was only twenty-four, tall, straight, and slim, with laughing, merry blue eyes, a clear, ruddy skin, and brown hair upon which he kept a satin shine by means of two military brushes with silver monograms.

His smile, like his laugh, was so frank and boyish, and so free from anything secretive or serious, that he was a pleasure to meet, young as he was. Moreover, he possessed that charming quality of utter irresponsibility which endeared him to the experienced and forgiving.

Now without the snug fortune that his Uncle Jack had left him, Ricky Lee would have died—just starved to death. As it was, the good fairy had been kind to Ricky, and provided him with an allowance of a little over eleven thousand francs a month. An apartment on the Avenue du Bois, two saddle horses, a low racing car, the color of a submarine, to play at suicide in, and a more comfortable crimson-lined limousine for

short voyages on long nights—all these were Ricky Lee's. With it all, he was a modest boy, sincere as an infant, generous to a fault, and he never boasted of his playthings.

It was amazing, when you stopped to consider, how much Ricky Lee required. The bootmaker and the tailor worked late for him, and the solid-mahogany closets in his dressing room—whose doors closed with such nicety that they emitted a little puff of air—were full of the bootmaker's and the tailor's most expensive wares—shining boots on heavy, brass-topped trees, layers of trousers ten deep, and sliding shelves full of perfect shirts and fat wads of ties, which his valet, Jean-Jacques, rearranged with patience whenever his master mussed them up. There was, moreover, a porcelain-walled bathroom with round corners, like a clinic's; and a cozy dark-oak and green-velvet dining room, with two excellent copies of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and a salon, hung in pale old-rose Chinese silk relieved by huge black vases with white dragons. Very chic, indeed, was Ricky's *garçonne*, whose windows peeped out upon the trees in the Avenue du Bois, framing the glittering line of equipages and automobiles that streamed by on their way to and from the Bois de Boulogne.

It was this glitter of Parisian life that Ricky lived for. It was getting close to a year now since Mrs. Lee, having chosen the last detail for the apartment

—the white-and-blue Chinese-silk rug in the bedroom—had bidden her boy good-by and returned to her home in Connecticut. Since then Ricky had been steeped in the glitter. His enthusiasm over it was intense. He pursued pleasure with that dogged persistence of youth which never flags. There were mornings when as early an hour as nine found him galloping off a Montmartois headache on his cob in the Bois; but usually he rose at noon and let it go at that. He thus found the days so arctic in their briefness that every waking minute became valuable.

This morning, I say, as he entered and found Mrs. Dale's note awaiting him on the night table by his bedside, he laid his opera hat and coat respectfully on the floor, and stood reading the note with a yawn. With his boyish brain singing with the bad champagne of Montmartre, he gathered sleepily that the Dales were where they were—in one of those silent hotels near the Etoile, in which gray-haired ladies traveling alone may stop with perfect security.

"Damn!" yawned Ricky Lee.

"Got to call, I suppose. Suppose I got to, to please mother." He winced, whipping out his free hand from the pocket of his Tuxedo, as, feeling for a cigarette, he extracted, with a pricked finger, a small pink satin heel. He found the protruding nail, and, as the satin heel went to join the coat and hat, Ricky recalled the girl whom it had belonged to, some hours before, during the dancing at the Abbaye Thélème. Then he got to bed, his duty toward the Dales still rankling in his mind.

"Marjorie Dale," he muttered, beneath a scarlet, embroidered coverlet of the Chinese. "Haven't seen her since she was a kid in Milford. Glad I don't have to live in Milford. Got to call—to please—" Ricky yawned again, stretched, closed his blue eyes, and fell asleep.

Now not once since his arrival in Paris had he put foot inside Notre Dame or the Louvre. Now and then, as he rushed by in his limousine at

gray dawn, in sight of the tomb of Napoleon, he would glance up at the gilded dome and make a mental resolve to brace up.

"I'll please mother," he'd say to himself. "I'll go there to-morrow." But, like the Louvre and Notre Dame, the tomb of the emperor never saw him.

When Ricky awoke, with his mind rinsed of Mrs. Dale and her daughter, it was past noon; and it was still later when he dropped in at Fouquet's Bar for a grilled chop and a pint of ale. They were glad there when he arrived. A certain instantaneous animation broke out among the waiters. Two girls powdered their noses, peering into a tiny pocket mirror to see if they were trim enough should Ricky by chance greet them with a handshake and a "*bonjour*." Ricky's French was atrocious; even if you could not understand a word of English, he was more comprehensible in his native American tongue.

As usually happened, Ricky sat at the corner table by the blazing grill, and invited the girl with the fox terrier, and the black *caniche* and the blonde he belonged to, and the two with the tiny mirror and the purse of gilt, and Charley van Peyser, and young René Levebre, and a fat friend of Levebre's, Monsieur Raoul de Villon—lyric artist—and his friend—*une artiste lyrique*—all to luncheon. They enlarged the table in the corner, and it became gay, at Ricky's expense. After the first spray of compliments in his behalf, they almost wholly forgot about Ricky, who sat heroically over his ale, barely touching his liqueur, for he knew full well the heavy afternoon and night that lay before him.

In strong moments like these, Ricky really seemed inspired with a touch of the horse sense of the man of the world that he believed himself to be.

Had he not promised to run out to take tea at Bellevue with Madge Birrotli, the vaudeville furor of two hemispheres, whom, with friends, he had invited to dinner at Paillard's, and, after it, to a box for the *première* at the Variétés, and after that Montmartre

—naturally; that sordid, tinsel jungle of raw-manufactured pleasure having become a nightly habit with Ricky, was difficult to break.

It was not until three days later, as he shot past the tomb of Napoleon in his limousine after lunching at La Perouse, that he recalled plain little Marjorie Dale and her mother. Evidently it was this sudden glimpse of the long-neglected tomb that brought his mother's old friend and her daughter to his mind.

"To-morrow," muttered Ricky doggedly to himself, and he shut his young jaw hard in virtuous determination. "To-morrow—early—you bet! They'll be out—and it'll be over."

Diane de Croisette, seated on the crimson seat beside him, a porcelain doll wrapped up in sables, laughed outright at Ricky's subconsciously grown tragic mood.

"*Mon Dieu!*" laughed Diane, regarding him in amused surprise out of her splendid stenciled eyes—eyes that could open and shut beautifully, and were lined with pale-blue grease in the corners.

"*Eh bien!* my little one, thou art funny—thou! What hast thou got, thou?"

"Nothing," grumbled Ricky, and then, ashamed of his ill nature before Diane, who, it must be said, was really such a good-hearted girl that she was always in a good humor, Ricky reddened and smiled.

"Visits. Eh, Diane? *Saves?* Understand?" explained the boy, snapping out his visiting card from his waistcoat pocket. "*La famille!*"—he pronounced it flamboyantly, "*La fam-ée!*"

"Oh, la! la!" gasped Diane, quick to comprehend, and braving her broken English. "Zee cousines—zee aunts—zee visites—Oh, la! la!—I haf—no—" she paused—"what you say?—famil-lee." But the boy beside her did not catch the subtle note of loneliness in her confession.

Ricky was himself again. They rushed on together in the direction of the Bois de Boulogne to the pigeon shooting at Bagatelle.

The fluttering of a white trap in the sunlight—the instantaneous battling uprush of its gray prisoners—the measured crack of both barrels of a hammerless—a fluttering, bleeding heap on the velvety grass, and Diane turned to Ricky.

"It is horrible!" she breathed savagely; "poor little bird, and for what? Zat stupid game to win gold—vary well, zaire are less cruel ways. Come, *mon petit*—let us go. It make me quite sick."

"You're right, Diane—it's rotten!" said the boy.

Only when they had reached their waiting automobile did she speak again, Ricky having explained to her vaguely who the Dales were.

"You must go," she counseled.

"I know zat is right for you to go, zerefore I tell you. Listen, my little one. Zen now you should be happy—zat you haf some good little duty to do. To call on zee friend of you're familiee—it is so leetle thing to do. Naturally, *mon petit*—I do not ask—but I am sure—it will—what you say?—please some one, some one else zat you really love—Ah, zat!—I know."

"You're right," said Ricky. Then he turned to Diane and looked her full in the penciled eyes—eyes that became suddenly glazed with tears—wholly out of place amid the worldly stenciling and the alluring lines of blue.

At precisely three-thirty the following afternoon, Ricky entered the Dales' hotel, the page hurrying ahead of him with his card.

Ricky waited in the gloomy, whispering parlor, in which an old lady in a white cap in the far corner, seated with her back to him, coughed over the *Herald*.

A clock ticked solemnly in the silence. The page bounded in and announced gleefully that madame and mademoiselle would be down in a moment.

Ricky sighed.

At that instant the lithe figure of a young girl appeared in the open door. She came straight toward him, her fresh

young face radiant, her firm white hand outstretched to greet him.

"Well, Marjorie!" exclaimed Ricky.

"Mother'll be down in just a minute," explained Marjorie. "Well, how are you? It seems ages since we've seen each other." She was flushed, and a little out of breath.

"You don't mind me calling you Marjorie?" laughed Ricky, a little embarrassed himself; "always did, you know."

"Of course, I don't," she smiled, giving him both her warm little hands in greeting. "Mother'll be so glad to see you. I'm afraid I've changed, haven't I, Mr.—Lee?"

"Oh, call me Ricky," said Ricky; "everybody calls me Ricky. How long you're going to stay?"

"Why—er—we don't know yet. You see, it all depends on father—didn't your mother write you? We came over alone, you know—mother and I. Dad's horribly busy over those fierce old railroad cases. Do sit down, won't you? Oh, sugar! I wish those dreadful railroad cases would end, then father could come over and we could travel around some. Aren't you just crazy to see Venice? But I suppose you have, haven't you? You're such an old traveler. Now tell me *all* you've been doing."

Ricky had been, for the last few moments, only half conscious of what she was saying; what he was conscious of was the change in Marjorie Dale from the sunburned, freckled little tot he had played and quarreled with when a child. Boy as he was, he could not help being a little awed and thrilled by the beauty of this girl of eighteen. He was conscious of her soft blond hair, waving about her temples—there was a fragrance to Marjorie's hair—of her fresh young skin, and the clearness of her violet eyes, and her fair, rosy little mouth, laughing as she spoke, baring her pretty teeth. Again, his blue eyes rested on her wealth of hair. It had been, it suddenly occurred to him, a long time since he had looked intently at any hair that was not dyed and lifeless.

"Don't you just adore Paris?" Marjorie had repeated this for the third time.

"Oh! oh, yes!" exclaimed Ricky, recovering himself awkwardly from his reverie. "Ha! Ha! of course—nothing like it. It's great."

"Aren't you just crazy about the Louvre?" cried Marjorie.

"Wonderful!" blurted out Ricky. "I mean, it's simply great about their getting away with the 'Joconde.'"

"Well—Ricky!" came the voice of Mrs. Dale, as she swept vigorously into the room. "Oh, you dear boy! Well, I don't blame your mother for being proud of you. I know you'll forgive me for being late if I tell you why—promise you won't tell? Well—I was just plumb in the middle of a long letter to your mother."

"Do take this chair, mother," implored Marjorie.

"When the boy brought up your card," continued Mrs. Dale, who was one of those round, comfortable little women whose general contentment in life is due to a perfect digestion. "Now you must tell us all you've been doing. How you've grown, Richard! I suppose we'll never see you in Milford any more?"

"I'm afraid not, Mrs. Dale—that is, not for a good while. I'm pretty well settled over here, I guess."

"So your mother wrote. I think she's just too brave for words to let you out of her sight so long. Well!" sighed Mrs. Dale, her lips narrowing to the size of a small buttonhole, "I suppose if it wasn't for your education, and if she didn't have puffed confidence in you, like as not she wouldn't have let you come. As I tell my husband, Sam, whatever our Wilbur wants to do—Oh, I think it's such a pity crossin' tastes in a boy. Suppose you've heard of Wilbur getting first honors at the commencement? We're very proud of Wilbur—as his father says— You'll find Milford changed," declared Mrs. Dale, noticing the young man's eyes wandering from hers toward Marjorie's. "You remember where the Simonds lived?"

"Ye-yes——" returned Ricky, starting to rise.

"Well, that's all torn down," confided Mrs. Dale; "and the Selling's place on the mountain was burned, you know. Yes, that was burned," sighed Mrs. Dale. "Last winter, wasn't it, daughter?"

"And on one of the coldest nights," returned Marjorie, with a little shiver of remembrance. "Ginger! My, but it was cold! Well, I guess! Fred and Mazie Hall—you remember Mazie, Ricky?—and Al Jenkins and his sister, and a lot of us girls, coasted down to the fire, and we were nearly frozen. You know, of course, the ice house was burned—one of the largest in the county, I believe. My, but it was simply glorious!—just millions of the dearest little reflections wriggling from the flames down in Cobs Pond—— Oh! must you?"

"I'm afraid I must," said Ricky, gripping her small, warm hand.

He bade Mrs. Dale good-by. He promised to come again—soon. He felt a little ashamed, as he passed out to his waiting automobile, that he had not invited the Dales to run out to Versailles, or St. Germain, or somewhere, for tea. He went away with the memory, for the first time in many months, of a pure young girl—one of his own kind. Marjorie's fresh young face—her sincerity—something—the youth and freshness, perhaps, of her beauty, lingered strangely in the heart of the boy. It was as if, in the midst of his foolish life, a curtain had been suddenly lifted, and he had caught a glimpse of home—a glimpse of something real and dear which he did not yet fully grasp the meaning of, but which the more he thought of, the bluer he got. What he really needed was a drink, so he rushed down the Champs Elysées to a very smart hotel for tea.

He found the graveled garden of the hotel crowded this late September afternoon, and the fast-setting twilight brought with it a still chill in the air that made the woman with stockings of gauze and suede shoes glad of a footstool and her furs.

Ricky stood on the steps searching the tea garden over for a vacant table, and some one he knew. He had not long to wait. The keen, black eyes of René Levebre, who was sitting with the Baron von Graffstein, had already spotted Ricky. Levebre's thin neck, sunk low between his round shoulders as he sat, gave him somewhat the appearance of a watching falcon. His intensely black hair, slicked back from his sal-low temples; his eyes, dark, shrewd, and cavernous from dissipation; and his thin, aquiline nose, made this *rastaquouère* of a Parisian strangely resemble a bird of prey.

Ah! That René Levebre! Who, like scores of others, slept in a modest garret by night, and moved in the swim by day. He who had now but the remnant of his former good looks, yet was always well dressed, immaculate, tactful, dangerous, and immensely popular with women. Voilà! That was Levebre, that conscienceless monsieur who counted Ricky's acquaintance as an asset, and who borrowed with such skillful grace that he lunched daily at the Café de Paris, dined at Paillard's, and supped at Maxim's.

The baron had been one of the same class, but had grown gray, fat, and weary of the game. Both before and after his release from prison, the baron had made many pleasant acquaintances. He now contented himself with getting others interested in Austrian mines, frankly admitting the exceptional favors granted him by the imperial court. Poor old baron! Always trying to make somebody really believe him! Being puffy and old, he had passed his popularity with the fair sex. On the other hand, René Levebre knew them by scores. The ease with which he moved among them and could present you to them was well worth knowing him for; at least, that was Ricky's enthusiastic opinion. And just by the merest chance, the little woman, clothed in white ermine, seated near them, for whom three silk hats were being lifted in passing, Levebre knew.

"It is La Varanowska," said he idly to the boy. "She will not forgive me

for not going to St. Germain yesterday. She lives out there when she is not dancing."

As he said it, the Russian woman turned, and half closing her soft brown eyes, smiled and shook a tiny, threatening, white-gloved finger at Levebre. Ricky saw, as they lifted their hats, that the soft brown eyes were not wholly unconscious of his presence.

"Villain!" laughed back La Varanowska sweetly at Levebre.

"*Merci, madame, vous êtes adorable!*" he returned tactfully, and, rising, went over to her, bent, and, raising her small, white-gloved hand, touched it to his lips; a word passed between them, La Varanowska nodded in assent, and Levebre returned.

"Madame Varanowska will be delighted to meet you," he announced smilingly to Ricky, and he added: "Lucky one, ah! lucky one! *Mon Dieu!*"

A sudden joy welled up in Ricky, while the baron, scenting some unforeseen and possibly unavoidable expense, discreetly toddled away. So the great danseuse, the famous Varanowska, wished to meet him, thought Ricky. He was still a little confused and red from embarrassment as he followed Levebre to the table occupied by one of the most beautiful women in the world.

That, most undeniably, La Varanowska was—not yet thirty years of age—slight—of a pleasing height—graceful—with the pure, oval face of a madonna, brown eyes—rich, auburn hair—a pink-and-white skin, and the gentle voice of a nun; a voice that her sad, expressive lips imprisoned and released in turns between two rows of pearly teeth, a voice full of childlike naïveté, caressing in its softness, yet capable of commanding with such gentle dignity that those who had lost their heads and their hearts over La Varanowska spoiled her hopelessly.

Long was the list of men who adored the very ground her small feet had touched—noblemen—famous soldiers—celebrated artists—among them more than one suicide, all for the sake of this lovely pink-and-white tea rose, very chic

to-day in her ermine toque, and coat, and muff. And now she had turned to this fresh young American, with his boyish impulsiveness and sincerity, and Ricky Lee felt for the first time in his life what an extraordinary young man he chanced to be—something between a prince regent and a *millionnaire*—something too tremendous for words.

From that ecstatic moment when the soft brown eyes welcomed him, Ricky Lee cared naught for anything—save for this woman, so exquisitely lovely to listen to and to look upon—ah, yes! You felt her childlike naïveté, her adorable dependence upon others for protection. Ricky, with his keen knowledge of the world, saw even deeper than this—he saw that La Varanowska was unlike all the rest—that she was a lady, born and bred; a lady whose gentle voice and soft brown eyes, with the sadness of the North in them, he alone understood. Before, he had amused himself. There is nothing ever very dangerous in amusement; it can be so easily ended; it can even be gulped like a glass of wine. Amusement is the emotion of the common horde. It has nothing whatever to do with the divine sensation of love, of the love of two souls.

"Here, you bring what I tell you!" repeated Ricky to the hesitating waiter.

"*Non—non!*" she exclaimed, again protesting with her small, gloved hand.

"Go and get it," commanded Ricky to the waiter; "and the nineteen hundred—vintage—"

"*Bien, monsieur.*"

"Oh! And so you must go, my dear Levebre!" said La Varanowska in perfect English. "I have not said yet that I forgive you for not coming yesterday to tea." He bowed and again lifted her hand to his lips.

"Always adorable!" he murmured, and took his leave.

They were alone.

"Do not, I pray you, let it be opened!" she pleaded.

"Why not?"

"Because, my dear boy, it is foolish, is it not? I rarely touch champagne, and you—no, it is quite foolish."

Under the soft gaze of her eyes, Ricky stayed the waiter's hand and sent back the wine. A few moments later he paid the check.

She laid her small hand with a gentle pressure of gratefulness over his own.

"Thank you," she said softly. "You are very *galant*, monsieur. It is your frankness—your gentleness, that I like."

She spoke slowly that he might not miss her words. "In Russia I should not have dared protest. Ah, my poor friend! You do not know—they are essentially brutal. I have known some who would have been terrible had I protested. Everything about us would have been broken; my people break when they drink, even our grand dukes. If the supper has been very gay, there is quite nothing left, I assure you. It is very stupid, is it not? All my life I have had a horror of noise—of things that grate. See, am I not gentle? Am I not—what you say?—quiet? It is because I love gentleness and calm. It is because the world continually frightens me with its harshness."

For an instant she covered her eyes with her small, gloved hands. Ricky leaned toward her, stammering what he really believed in the impulsiveness of his captured heart.

It had been decided between them that he should escort her back to St. Germain in her automobile, his own following. It was nearly dark, and the tea garden deserted, when they left, en route for St. Germain.

As they rushed on, La Varanowska grew tense and silent. He watched her anxiously, imploring her to speak. He even feared that she was ill.

Suddenly, with the impulsiveness of her race, she turned upon him, drew his young face to her lips, and kissed him.

"Pardon! Pardon! *mon petit*—" she gasped faintly.

The next instant Dicky was conscious that he held her in his arms, that the great La Varanowska was crying like a child, and moaning something in Russian wholly unintelligible to the boy who tried to comfort her.

That was the swift and dramatic beginning of Ricky Lee's infatuation for La Varanowska. What followed during the next four months was far more serious. He had longed for glitter, for life, adventure, and romance. It was his at last. Montmartre and the idle life he had lived were commonplace and sordid to him now. He was thrilled by the distinction of being adored by La Varanowska.

Yet, little by little, as the days and weeks went by, there filtered into his intense joy both fear and despair. Rarely did he ever see La Varanowska alone. Though he was almost daily with her out at St. Germain or in Paris, she refused, save with others, to dine with him in his snug oak dining room. At St. Germain there still came her critics and their friends, and *their* friends, although she had ceased to dance, owing to Ricky's pleading. There were often as many as fifteen at tea with her; Levebre and a raft of others came to pay her homage. Some of them even went so far as to straggle along to the races, where La Varanowska invariably lost, and lost heavily, with her gentle, childlike, inconsequent laugh.

The game was more than the boy had bargained for. It was a game for a grand duke with the imperial coffers to draw from. They began to look at Ricky gravely at his bank. The sums he drew were heavy, and he had long ago drawn upon a certain sum that belonged to him, but which he had half promised his mother not to touch.

From the lighthearted Ricky he had grown silent and morose. A ghost of his former self now teared at St. Germain. Ricky had weathered some heavy weather lately; La Varanowska, he had discovered, possessed the temper of a fiend. Almost daily now she quereled with him—even before others. Another thing worried him—his account at the bank. He drew less and less, but even then the monthly statement and the increased gravity of the paying teller struck terror into his tired heart.

It was at the bank, one rainy morning in April, as he stood drearily counting

his gold, that a cheery voice at his elbow made him turn sharply.

"Aren't you afraid of robbers?" laughed Marjorie Dale.

"Marjorie!" exclaimed Ricky.

"I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself, Ricky! It's ages since you came to see us."

"I'll—I'll come to-day," stammered Ricky—and he meant it—"if you'll let me. You'll be in, won't you? Wouldn't you and your mother like to run out to—say, Versailles or some old place? Please say you will."

"I—I don't know," breathed Marjorie. "I'll have to ask mother."

"Well, may I come?" pleaded Ricky.

"Why—of course—Ricky."

She looked at him earnestly. "You've changed so," she said. "Aren't you thinner than you were? Haven't you been ill?"

"Oh! I've been all right," said Ricky.

Marjorie—the beauty, and freshness, and sincerity of her—Marjorie—whom he had neglected—Mrs. Dale, his mother's oldest friend—mother—these three memories took a sudden and strange possession of him, with a joy that awoke, as he stood there before this fair little daughter of his own race, a new life in him. In those brief moments he had grown happier. A new resolve had entered his heart and mind.

"I'll take you home," said he, as they descended the stairs of the bank together. His own voice sounded vague and dreamy to him. Even as they chatted, en route to the hotel near the Étoile, Ricky continued within himself his soliloquy; and, on his way back alone, he told himself many things—mostly that he had been a fool—and that he was through. If ever a boy longed for home and mother, it was Ricky Lee.

Now it is chronicled that René Levebre managed the breaking of the friendship between La Varanowska and Ricky with tactful shrewdness, with, I may say, almost fatherly devotion. Even when La Varanowska wrote two perfumed notes threatening Ricky's life, and gave them to Levebre to deliver, Levebre managed it with such admira-

ble force and shrewdness that nothing happened, and Ricky was not even once apprehended or disturbed coming to and fro from the Dales' hotel. That which Ricky most feared was the sudden appearance of La Varanowska; it might happen at any time—when he was with Marjorie—in the hotel—on the street. The price that Levebre had so skillfully arranged with La Varanowska to guarantee Ricky's peace of mind was naturally high, but, as Levebre said, La Varanowska was in a desperate mood. She had nothing to lose. Ricky had everything. Levebre explained these undeniable and time-worn facts with logical clearness. If La Varanowska had refused engagements to dance, it was purely on account of her devotion to Ricky. All she asked was to have the amount she had thus thrown away reinstated. The amount was high—"Ah, ça!" and Levebre shrugged his shoulders in desolation for his young friend.

Ah! Had Ricky only known—but how could he have known, being young and inexperienced?—that morning when he counted out twenty-five thousand francs at the bank to Levebre, and placed them safely in his hands to be delivered to La Varanowska—if he only had known, I say, that La Varanowska, owing to her wide experience, had easily, and without the slightest regret, let Ricky slip out of her life! Seeing that the boy had begun to economize, she had simply refused to see him. Levebre had then stepped in to stand by his friend in trouble. He having first exacted a promise from Ricky neither to write to nor see La Varanowska, the rest was easy. He forged the threatening letters, manufactured his appeals to the woman, and pocketed the twenty-five thousand francs. In a word, before noon of the morning of the payment, Monsieur René Levebre had disappeared from the shores of France; he was gone—vanished like a whiff of smoke from his cigarette.

A month passed, and the Dales sailed for America. So did Ricky Lee—on the same ship. You see, it was this way. It was almost their last evening

together, and the thought of Marjorie's going and his being left absolutely alone in Paris without the Dales, weighed so heavily on Ricky's heart and mind that he grew very serious that evening after dinner in the gloomy salon of the hotel. And the truth was that Marjorie, brave and proud as she was, had to bite her fair little lips to keep the tears back when she thought of Ricky and the miles and thousands of miles that would soon separate them. She felt as if she would never, never see him again, and somehow Ricky felt the same thing.

It was simply dreadful.

Finally Mrs. Dale bade her daughter good night.

"I'll be up in just a minute, mother," Marjorie promised. Her young voice did not break.

"Richard, you'll see that she does?" insisted Mrs. Dale. "She must not stay up too late."

"Yes, Mrs. Dale—I'll see."

In a sort of dogged desperation, Ricky drew Marjorie aside. It was quite dark where they stood beside a dusty blue plush chair under a dry palm.

"Marjorie!" said Ricky.

She staggered toward him, and he took her in his arms. She covered her face with her hands, and dropped her fair little head on his shoulder. "Oh! Oh! I don't want to go!" she sobbed. "I ca-can't stand it!"

He kissed a tear trickling halfway down her warm cheek.

"I'm going, too!" he whispered in her small, burning ear.

But it was not that night that Marjorie promised to be his wife. It seemed to them both ages after that, not, in fact, until their very last night at sea, with the prospect of the four hours by train that would soon separate them staring them in the face as plain as the light from the porthole of the captain's cabin.

They leaned together against the rail of the damp boat deck. Far down below them ran a ghostly, hissing line of foam. The salt wind cut their faces, but they stood there as if in a dream; Ricky, with Marjorie's "yes" his own forever, like the small, warm hand which he held against his cheek.

Then, suddenly, the great liner passed into a thin veil of fog, and from her giant throat there welled up a grumbling, wailing, devilish blast, thundering, vibrating, the very deck upon which they stood trembling beneath them, as if the good old ship were roaring out its congratulations.

"I'm going down to Marconi mother everything," declared Ricky to Mrs. Dale the next morning at breakfast; "now, so she'll get it before we dock."

"Oh!" exclaimed Marjorie—"everything?"

"Why not now?" interposed Mrs. Dale, with motherly decision.

"That's just what I think," said Ricky Lee; "now. It'll please mother so." And it did.



AN APRIL NIGHT

APRIL and night;

The low moonlight
Confers with flowers and trees;
Grave silences
Wherein the way
Is planned toward May.

CHRISTIAN GAUSS.



WHOSO DIGGETH A PIT

By

Flavia Rosser



TERENCE O'CAROLAN put his fiddle into the black bag and hung it by its neck between two pegs on the wall, turning indifferently the while from Moira, his wife, and Adrian le Coeur, their guest. Moira's youthful shoulders drooped and her eyes grew sad as she watched him. As for Le Coeur, his eyes were suddenly all for her beauty, which he seemed to have noticed for the first time.

Turning away, O'Carolan paused in the doorway. The spring sun that had been so long in brightening came warmly in at last through the trees that bordered the clearing, its light on the rough cabin floor colored to amethyst by the floating smoke of bonfires. The other settlers were heeding the call of the soil, but the spring made other demands on Terry O'Carolan.

He smelled the faint, sweet odors arising from the forest floor; he saw the red mist of buds in the treetops and, listening, with that fine ear of his, he could almost hear the fairy laughter of the leaves as they came forth. But his thought these days, when it was not upon his violin, was altogether set upon the waking of animal life in the forest. Although the trapping season was at an end, Terence was laying plans for yet another winter.

Presently, Adrian le Coeur went to stand beside his whilom host. Le Coeur was a hunter of bigger game on wilder trails than that which made sport for simple Terry. But the black beast Mel-

ancholy had pursued him to this cabin in a strange land, and he was grateful for its refuge. He had also a broken wrist, which he had gotten ignobly enough by a fall on the trail. This hurt, Moira's tending and Terry's sympathy had done much to heal during his days with them.

"The beavers will soon be rising," he now ventured.

"And the muskrats!" cried Terry. "I all but hear them splashing their little feet up and down in the water. And the foxes are treading smooth the edges of their burrows with their velvet tiptoes. But the wolves"—and his tone changed into one of disappointment—"the wolves have gone into hiding, and I have not yet taken the mate of the Terror of the Nighttime."

So saying, the trapper stepped down from the doorsill and surveyed the greatest triumph of his life in the forest. Outspread on an oaken slab was the skin of his last victim. Although it was still new and pliable to the fingers, many men had already ridden in to look upon it with delight. For the skin had, until of late, been worn by the leader of a scourging pack of wolves—the great wolf known far and wide as "the Terror of the Nighttime."

O'Carolan stooped now and turned the magnificent pelt about proudly. The tawny hair fell back, exposing the lighter undercoat. The loosened head dropped back across his hand, the eye sockets empty of any reproach at his

belated caresses. "It's a good God that gives His creatures pelts like these," he ventured, looking up at the two within the doorway.

Moirá shrank at the sight. "He gives them for their use and not for ours, I'm thinking," she cried; "and as for me—you know it, Terry—my heart is always heavy with sorrow for the poor beasties."

Le Coeur looked again, this time long and longingly, at the beautiful girl, wasting her sweetness, it seemed, in this desert home. Spring was rising in his veins after a pitiless winter. "O'Carolan," he asked suddenly, a touch of insolence in his rich tones, "why do you not give up the trapping and take to planting potatoes in the little clearing?"

"That is what I want most of anything," echoed Moira fervently, "that he should work the little clearing."

Le Coeur's insolence was as nothing to that which glanced back in Terence's brilliant smile. He deigned but the smile, and then bent forward as if listening. As he harkened thus, apparently to something far away, he withdrew as it were beyond any reach of taunt or pleading. Presently, however, he turned back to them, still listening and smiling. "Hist, now, the two of you!" he cried.

"What is it that you hear?" they asked him.

Without answer, he reentered the cabin and took the fiddle again from between the pegs. He held it flat before him, and the two watching him saw that though the strings were motionless, they made music audible to some finer sense within him. Moira, for her part, looked at the instrument in dumb despair. In it she saw the reason for their precarious existence in a rich, new land; the reason why the spade rusted in disuse, while the cruel traps took the place of the tools of honest labor. But as she looked from it to her husband's face, love struggled bravely with despair.

"The saints be praised!" Terry cried, after a moment. "There's a dance to-night at the loggers' camp."

"How do you know that, then?"

Terence narrowed his eyes in gentle laughter. "The air is full of secrets, and my feet are fain for dancing. I must be off by sunset."

"It will be a long walk for you," faltered Moira, "and, besides, we have a visitor."

"Bless him!" cried Terence heartily; "he shall go with me. The lassies will pity his poor arm and be kind."

A strange and surly mood had the heretofore courteous Adrian le Coeur. "I want no pitying kindness," he said, "nor foolish dancing."

"Ah," teased Terry, "wait until you see the pretty lassies!"

"A plague on pretty girls, I say!" returned the other.

"The prettiest girl in the world," persisted Terry, "will be there. She is the *facteur's* daughter. She has golden eyes like a bird, and a voice like water singing in a dingle. She is so proud and haughty that you yourself would tremble before her."

"A curse, I say, on *facteurs'* daughters!" said Le Coeur tensely, and, sitting down, white with anger, he clenched his hands on the wooden table before him.

Terence gazed for a moment in amazement, and then walked away. It was not long thereafter that he set about his gay preparations for the evening's pleasure. Whether Adrian le Coeur cursed the pretty girls of the loggers' camp and all the camp bosses' daughters in creation—and in so doing wrenched his hurt arm fiercely—mattered not to Terence O'Carolan, now that the fever for dancing was upon him. Neither did he care that Moira cried out in anxiety at the harm done to the poor arm. His hour was full of festive preparations, and no doubts or forebodings marred his anticipation.

From then until after he was gone at sunset—just after the three had had their frugal meal together—Adrian sat silent by the window, watching the dusk settle down upon the forest. Long after the sun had gone, he still sat there, motionless. As the dark of the long northern evening deepened, a heavier darkness fell upon his spirit. To Moira,

sewing at her rough wooden table, and glancing up now and then, it seemed as if another man than the one they had known had entered the cabin, and sat down by the window.

It was almost sunset when Terence O'Carolan strode forth from his little clearing, the fiddle in its bag upon his shoulder, a riot of music in his brain. He saw in fancy the yellow floor of the great house at the logging camp, the sputtering candles, the swaying figures in the dance. He knew that praise and welcome awaited him there, and his delicate mouth was set in a boyish smile.

As he went thus, his thoughts riding far ahead on a wild wind of melody, he forgot the clearing, and the rusty tools of tillage. He even forgot the last trap that he had vowed to set to yet take, if he might, the mate of "the Terror of the Nighttime." The black waters of the beaver pool grew still at the sound of his feet, and many tiny, sharp eyes peered forth in hatred, as their owners waited his passing.

But suddenly, pausing on a sunset hill above a twilight valley, he remembered. A distant sound aroused him, a blood-chilling refrain, wafted upon the forest night from some waste where forgotten bones lay whitening. It was not the prelude of the wind before a storm; it was not the guttural converse of frogs in the bayou; it was more threatening than either. It took Terry but a moment to recognize the sound.

"That," he said slowly, to himself, "is the voice of the great wolf that I should be catching, and she is half mad with hunger. I wish that I had *her* pelt, too, drying on a slab!"

The menacing cry arose again from the wooded ridge where his cabin lay. Terry suddenly swung the fiddle down from between his shoulders. "I'll take her!" he cried. "Though I'm an hour late at the dancing; yes, and though I've no trap but the pit to do it with, I'll chance taking her by morning."

He hurried forward to where, but a few steps away, lay the deep pit in which, using an old-world device, he had taken the leader of the pack. To

be sure, he had had before the strong steel trap, with its chain and drag, to aid him. But now he would try the pit alone, as his fathers had been forced to do before him.

And as an idle man's luck would have it, his tools lay close at hand. In a little runlet stood a growth of last year's reeds. These pale and fragile stems he used to cover the pit, and when a bit of soil and moss had been spread upon them the wildest beast could not have guessed the deep and rock-walled pit that lay beneath. Terence swore softly at the delay the finding of a tempting bait caused. Presently he bethought him of a little trap hidden near by in a crevice of rock. It was still baited with a dry crust, and, with this in his hand, he sought an open place, where the ground had been undermined by the tunnelings of lowly rabbits and field mice. Setting it, he stepped back and waited.

The minutes lapsed into a half hour while he stood there. But finally he lifted his snare and saw that there hung therein a limp and silky rabbit, its tiny feet set covetously upon the fatal crumb. The trapper stabbed the quivering thing with his knife, and let the blood run here and there to cover his guilty trail.

Treading carefully about the treacherously covered pit, he placed the bait on the fragile reeds. Then he laughed in exultation, as he prepared to depart. "There is but one chance in many that I take the mate of the Terror," he remarked, "but that chance is mine." Then he ran gayly on his way to the big clearing, with never a thought of the lonely house in the darkening valley behind him.

In that house, at about that moment, Adrian le Coeur stood up to his full height and looked down at Moira as she sewed by the light of a garish coal-oil lamp. He did not hear the great wolf's cry, or, if he did, he was not disturbed by it; his senses had attained a rest in that deep silence which follows an emotional storm. Moira looked up. "The forest calls me, and I must go," he told her gently.

"You are not going now?" she asked, deeply stirred.

"No," he answered, smiling, "only so far as the doorstep. I shall sit there for a while and breathe the night. I wish you sleep and rest." He added after a moment, as Moira smiled, too, reassured; "I go early in the morning; I may not see you before I take the trail. In that case, I beg you to remember that I set your name in worshipful love beside that of another good and beautiful woman—one that I loved—and lost."

For hours after Moira's lamp had flared out into darkness, Le Coeur sat motionless on the doorstep. He did not breathe the night as he had said, only the memory of another forest night. He fled to the past to escape the present. He remembered that he might forget. Once, when, through the fabric of his dreams, he felt the chill of the air momentarily, he leaned down and ripped the great wolf skin from the slab. As he drew it about his shoulders, he shrugged them scornfully. "He may well spare me this—the laggard," he muttered, thinking of Terry at the dance.

The time O'Carolan spent on the shining floor of the dance hall, cheered by laughter and the light of guttering candles, seemed to him time spent on another planet, on some whirling world of beauty and delight. And there, high as a white moon above the red candles, reigned Aimée, the *facteur's* daughter.

She had never deigned to notice him—or any other, for that matter—with any special favor, since her coming; but to-night suddenly he felt as if the white moon had come down from her height and was smiling with approval upon him, whether he danced or whether he played. He observed this miraculous kindness, first, early in the evening, when the girl had overheard him telling—volatile and expansive talker that he was—a story of the stranger whom he had entertained of late at his cabin. Finally she beckoned the delighted Terry to where she stood, her golden eyes wide and sweet, her white neck

arching proudly. Graciously, she bade him tell her of his home, his wife, his life in the forest, and again of the stranger of whom he had spoken.

Her starry glance held him thereafter as by a spell. He was impelled to linger near, wherever she held her court. When he played, he made the strings sing for her alone. He watched her wonderingly as she glided, now and then, out into the dance with such favored partners as met the approval of her father, tyrannical camp boss that he was.

Finally, when relieved of piping for others' play, he joined the dancers, he made bold to ask her to honor him with her hand for the wild riot of grace just beginning. "No," she answered quietly, drawing back; then, as suddenly leaning forward, she asked him the name of the stranger who had made his home at the cabin of late.

"Adrian le Coeur is his name," Terence answered wonderingly.

"Come, then," she cried at this answer, her eyes blazing, her hand outstretched. But when the woodsman would have taken her hand for the dance, she was suddenly gone, running backward and beckoning out of an open door, and on to the log gallery. "Come," she cried gayly, as he hesitated, "let us dance in the moonlight in the dooryard."

Yet when Terence would have approached her there, breathless, she was gone, flitting on again like a white wraith ahead of him. One moment she was in the clearing, the next she was at the mouth of the great trail that led into the forest. Dazed with astonishment, tantalized by her beauty, Terence ran after, clasp as he went the fiddle and bow, which, in his eagerness to claim her for the dance, he had not abandoned. Finally, as he watched the white figure, which seemed to float on a current of moonlight above the path, he cried out sharply in dismay:

"Saints' names, mademoiselle! Where are you leading me?"

"To the little wood road, m'sieu," she called back.

"And why?"

"Does not the little road lead to your cabin?" she gave back laughingly.

"And are you mad, that you seek my cabin?" he cried.

"Yes," she answered. "I am mad with joy."

Terence guessed, now, that she was playing with him, and was oppressed with anxiety, even as he ran. "Made-moiselle," he gasped, "remember your father, the camp, and the folks there."

"I have no father," she cried; "there is no camp any more, no anything. The world is falling away in golden rings of light beneath my feet. The miles are as nothing, if I go to him."

At last, Terence O'Carolan and Aimée Duprée came in their chase to the little hollow, where the dark was darkest, and the black waters of the beaver pool glistened. There it was that Terence heard again the cry of the mate of "the Terror of the Nighttime," the great wolf which was evidently yet at large, seeking to devour. Aimée heard it, too, and paused, her leaping pulses halted like a frozen fountain.

The cry was close at hand, hoarse and wild with hunger. "Turn back, Aimée Duprée!" cried Terence; "turn back, while yet you have a moment of time!" He planted himself in the trail before her, and, because she paused for a bit in her flight, leaning against a tree in the darkness, he believed that she had obeyed him and turned back. He knew that he stood between her and the oncoming cry. Relieved for a moment, he plunged forward into the shadows without thought of what to do next. Then, suddenly, the earth gave way beneath him, and he plunged down and down as into an abyss.

As he came to rest after a bit, bruised and shaken, he knew that he had come unawares upon the pitfall that he had dugged, and had so become quarry to his own desires. Above him was the wreck of the treacherous floor of reeds; upon the earth beside him, the innocent and untouched lure wherewith he had baited his trap. His next thought was for his fiddle, and he felt for it, with trembling fingers, and found the box sound and vibrant, and the bow still intact.

And then, rising, instrument in hand, Terence O'Carolan made his bow, unexpectedly, to the audience for which he had all of his life, unknowingly, kept his best tunes, and for which he was to play as he had never played before. Confronting him—looking down over the pit's edge—was the beast for which the trap had been set. Man-hatred, hunger, and revenge shone in her eyes. She was fit mate for "the Terror of the Nighttime," and, as she viewed his slayer, her jaws clicked in their sockets.

O'Carolan's first impulse was the primal one of self-defense; then he realized suddenly, with an uplift of spirit, that he, as a man, ought to be superior to his foe in subtle aggression. The thing that he must do came to him like an inspiration. He raised the violin to his breast, lifting the bow in air. He set his face, jowl to jowl, by that of the beast, and then he played.

He played as he had never played before; just such protest he made as did those masters of music who have created battle hymns and bitter humor-sketes out of their own indignations and woe. And up through this protest beat tones of ancient wrath, cries of race wrongs and race hatreds, all at the moment's call. He played triumphantly, too, for after a moment or two the amazed brute threw back her ears, glanced fearfully this way and that, and dropped her lashing tail upon the ground. Cowering thus, she retreated into the darkness.

But even as hope revived in him, Terence heard the stealthy tread of her feet as she circled the pit's edge. And at the same moment—as he still played—there was a sudden snap, a whirl, and something struck him sharply in the face. At first he flinched, thinking it the claw of the beast, parrying an attack; but in a moment he knew that it was a string of the violin, which, under the ardor of his playing and the dampness of the night air, had snapped in twain. Looking up, he saw, too, that the wolf sat again upon the pit's edge. As he gazed at her in terror and dismay, he heard a voice speaking, which

could, of course, have been none other than the voice of the wolf.

"Whatever you may say," the voice declared, "force is not all, superior strength and cunning are not all. Sometimes the aggressor, the strong one, falls into his own trap; at last, sometimes, the wronged one has her day."

"So you can talk, can you?" cried Terry; "then you can listen, too. There are other songs in this fiddle for you to hear. Listen"—his voice grew soft and wheedling—"listen."

As he keyed the remaining strings with trembling fingers, Terence remembered the tunes he had played for the merry-makers that night. He would play them now for this fierce and merciless one. Fear had failed to drive her away; he must divert her as best he could. So the lovely, joyous airs came forth in a swarm, like impatient golden bees. The branches of the forest seemed to sway, and the stars to move to the melody, but the mother wolf sat imperturbable.

Another string snapped, and again the music died. The critic on the pit's edge spoke now in a cold, judicial tone. "Such music," the voice said, "is well enough for men and women. They alone, of all animals, give themselves to useless movements, to merriment without meaning, and to emotions without reason. I have seen from afar off your sports and dances. As for us of the forest, our lives are sharp and hard—you cannot understand them."

"Stop, bold creature!" cried O'Carolan, nerving his arm again. "What can you know of pleasure or of human affection?" Terence had a passion for comradeship, and the thought of the joys of it revived his spirit. "Listen!" he cried, "and I will tell you things that you should know." And then, on the two strings that remained to him, he spoke those things, as he could never have spoken them with his tongue, or lived them in his life. He spoke—in phrases circumscribed but fluent, low-pitched but mellow—of the beauty of friendship and—suddenly remembering Moira—of love.

But when the third string snapped, as

it did at last, the beast still sat on the pit's edge, and the voice said sternly: "Miserable man, prate not to me of the passion for mate or brother, or of affection for offspring. Sometimes, in the fierce pursuance of the life ordained us, we low things also taste, in turn, of sweetness and despair. There was one who used to come when the moon lay white on the grasses. His eyes were truer than the eyes of men. Tell me, where is he?"

O'Carolan did not reply to her question, although he knew its answer well. He thought of the pelt at home by the doorstep, and the cold sweat of final fear broke out upon his brow. The mate of "the Terror of the Nighttime," watching him, seemed to know that her time had come. She crouched and spread her feet wide apart on the pit's edge. She moved her gaunt haunches to and fro, playing with his terror. "No," she cried menacingly, "do not talk to me of love."

O'Carolan grew faint and lurched against the pit's edge. "Wait!" he cried. "I cannot die yet—because of Moira. Let me tell you of my beautiful wife, Moira; of her faithfulness and my unfaith; of her goodness and of my unworthiness; of it all. Who will care for her when I am gone?"

One chance remained, a slender chance, indeed, at such a juncture. O'Carolan played now, not for pleasure, not for praise, not for life itself, but at last for selfless love. The sounds he brought forth upon that one string were not sounds of surpassing melody. They were only the faint and anguished exclamations of a soul that knows itself too late. They quivered faintly on the night air for a little while, and then the last string snapped.

The player sank exhausted against the pit's wall. He seemed now, in his self-condemnation, indifferent to all but his bitter thoughts. When he did rouse somewhat, however, he was astonished at the change in the beast before him. It sat looking at him with friendly eyes, anxious, doglike, brotherly eyes.

"Bury your cold hands in my fur, my brother," he heard it say. "Lay hold

of me on either side, and let me draw you up from where you have fallen. We that are low are made to serve those that are high. Why, with all this talking, did you not tell me before that you were a true lover, that you know what it is to spend yourself with joy? Why did you not talk of home to one who hollows out her home in the hillside and loves it well; of helplessness to one whose children huddle and shiver as they wait her coming, even now?"

Amazed beyond measure, but strengthened by the wolf's tone, O'Carolan climbed with that new-born strength to the pit's edge, and stood beside his foe. With a sudden impulse, he flung his violin back into the pit and laughed as he heard the loose soil trickle down and bury it there. He turned to look at the wolf, but she had stepped aside, and even as he heard her velvet steps departing, he heard the last echo of the voice that had taught him many things. "I seek to do no harm," it said; "I am forced to my acts by an immutable law that is higher than my will. Be glad, my brother, that your higher will need bend alone to the highest law of love."

Adrian le Coeur, roaming the forest night, leaped up at the moment from as strange an adventure, in its way, as Terence's. He leaped up and laughed aloud, whether in triumph or amusement, or wonder, he could not have said. And then and there, he was stopped short in the trail by a few sobbing words that seemed to bubble up like a fairy spring at the foot of a tree. "Do not laugh, Adrian," sobbed Aimée. "I love your words, but not your bitter laughter."

"Oh, God of grace!" cried Adrian. "Aimée, my beloved, are you here?"

"Yes."

"Are you a spirit in the air?—it is dark—I can not see."

"No, I am fallen—in the darkness—here by a tree. Lift me up, for if you do not lift me, I will never rise again."

He found her and held her high against his breast. "Have you come back to me, then, my wife?"

"Yes, I have come back to you by the long, steep trail of sorrow," she sobbed.

"And I to you through the deep waters of repentance," he replied.

Moira came to unlatch the door for her late-returning husband. Her gray eyes, which were heavy with weeping, brightened at the sight of him. "Oh, Terry," she said, "I thought I heard another voice than yours before you came, talking in the clearing. I have been frightened."

"It was the mate of the Terror of the Nighttime talking, perhaps," he answered, smiling. "She has a sweet voice and gentle."

Moira looked at him pityingly. "You are touched with the madness of loneliness," she told him. "My poor darling, I know it well. I have often been lonely."

"You shall not be lonely again, my sweet!" cried Terry, as he kissed her. "After this, too, I will do everything you want me to all of the time. I will fill up the wolf pit and take up all the snares I have set for muskrats and beaver. Never again will I set a pit-fall for any living creature, and never again shall you be lonely."

"But what of the fiddle?" asked the unconvinced Moira.

"Maybe you will be more lonesome for that fiddle, though," answered Terry evasively, "than you think. The spade and the ax shall quarrel for its place between the pegs there."

The things that Terence O'Carolan said he would do he did, and the things that he vowed he would not do he refrained from, and peace came down with the warming summer sun upon the clearing. The memory of that strange night in the forest grew so beautiful to Terence that it ceased to seem strange any more. Only one thing about it he could never understand, and that was how the great wolf's hide that he had left spread on a slab beside his doorstep came to be lying next morning on the edge of the hollow in the depth of the forest, beside the pit to which the great wolf, its wearer, had fallen prey.



A SERVANT, entering the library of a Fifth Avenue club, approached me and said: "Mr. Converse telephones he will be here to see you in five minutes. Yes, sir."

"At this hour!" I exclaimed.

It was three by the clock. But Converse had specious habits. He seldom appeared in the club before midnight. Hence my surprise. Though I little suspected it, I was in for another—for another one yet. But to Converse, so far, at least, as I am concerned, anything and everything was permissible.

I had always known him. We were in the same form at St. Paul's, in the same corps at Heidelberg. In addition, I discreetly admired his sister, who had long lived abroad, and who but recently had returned here. Moreover, he had of late rather stirred me with inflammatory accounts of Margaret Dayce, a Philadelphia beauty, whom he was trying to win, in the face, too, of another chap, a man named Bundy, who also was in the running.

Naturally, my money was on Converse. But what did he want now, I wondered.

I looked about. The servant had gone. Save for the caryatides of the bookshelves, I was alone, and I took up a paper, an item of which had already absorbed me.

The item concerned Raritan, another old schoolmate. Though I would hardly have known him then, had I met him in a pantry. I could see him, as I first did,

a slim, handsome lad, leaning against a table in my room in the upper school at Concord, and talking very agreeably about the Sicilian poets.

That day, when he had gone, I had missed my watch. But as I might have missed it earlier, I had omitted to suspect him. Subsequently, from other rooms, other things evaporated. Finally Raritan left St. Paul's. For that matter, we all did. One cannot be a school-boy forever, and more's the pity. But I continued to hear about Raritan. What I heard was not ingratiating. Now here he was again, accused of forgery, and reported to be in hiding.

"Forgery!" I mentally exclaimed, and marveled a bit that he and I, who had been educated together, should have such different views on the proper use of pen and ink.

These meditations were interrupted. Converse, looking extremely red, and equally fit, was talking rapidly at me.

"Bundy's got Margaret—or will have, unless I stop them, and I want you to help me. They came on from Philadelphia to-day, and have already secured the license."

I jumped up. "Then you are done for. How did you hear?"

"Her mother wired. Bundy simply worked on the poor child's jealousy."

"A fruitful soil, was it?"

"Well, she saw me kissing a woman, saw me embracing her, saw her throw herself in my arms."

I patted a smile. "Rather barefaced and luxurious of you, don't you think?"

But how did she come to behold this idyl?"

"In a moving picture."

Incredulously I stared. "But——"

Converse cut me short. "You remember when I went to meet the *Lusitania*? There the picture people got me and Sarah, too."

"Your sister!"

"Yes, my sister."

"But then——"

"Yes, of course. When Margaret learns the truth it will be rather a bomb. But meanwhile——"

I picked up my hat. "Meanwhile it is all too bad to be false."

"It is worse. Margaret has never seen my sister. Bundy has. Bundy knows Sarah—however slightly. But he knows her. In spite of which, yesterday he took Margaret to see this confounded picture. There and then she threw me over, and he got her to promise to marry him here to-day."

"I don't wish him many happy returns of it, then."

Absently, Converse nodded. "It is human to lose in death those for whom we care. It is inhuman to lose them in life." He paused, looked grimly down, and determinedly up. "I can't lose her, I shan't, I won't!"

"Bravo!" I cried. "The moving picture shows, and, having shown, moves on. Let's be going. By the way, where is she?"

"Headed, her mother said, either for the Waldorf or the St. Regis. They got here at two. It is three now. It will have taken them an hour to get the license. We may be in time."

"We have got to be," I answered. "This club is midway between the two hotels. I will go to the one, you go to the other."

In speaking I put my hat on, and made with Converse for the stair. "I think I know Bundy," I added. "He was at St. Paul's, wasn't he? Apropos! That was an engaging tale about Raritan. Have you seen him lately?"

For a moment, Converse, occupied with other things, did not answer. Presently and indifferently he nodded. "The last time I saw the brute was in a

Fifth Avenue bus. He was completely bald and presumed to complain to me about it. I told him it was unimportant what he had on his head, the important thing was what he had in it."

But now we had reached the street, where, for club purposes, motors stood.

"Take a cab," Converse resumed. "I will take one, too." As he spoke, he motioned to a chauffeur.

I motioned to another, and called at him: "If they are not at the St. Regis, join me at the Waldorf."

From the taxi which he was then entering he called back at me: "If they are at the Waldorf, explode the bomb."

"The bomb?" I queried mentally, as the car started, but at once I got it, and I fell to thinking, and rather platonically I fear, of the dynamic qualities of truth. At the Waldorf, though, I found new reflections.

The lobby, saturated with tobacco and electricity, full of people, of hurrying servants, of tourists eying one another hostilely, or with indifference, resounded with the call of pages, the click of the typewriter, the hum of talk.

Through the vibrations of it all, I approached the desk. Approaching it, also, was a man, rather tall, with Piccadilly clothes, a Delmonico manner, and an air of intense satisfaction. Beside him was a girl in a frock that suggested fresh almonds. From her arm swung a bag of Peking yellow, on which batted an argent monster with eyes of jade. Topping all was a hat that might have cost a thousand dollars. Doubtless it had cost less. I lack the huckster's eye. But not, I hope, the eye for beauty. The girl was extraordinarily fair. Her hair rippled with gold. Yet in her face, in which there was all of youth's courageous innocence, there was also, it seemed to me, the look of one who has taken what children call a dare, and who now rather wished that she had not.

This impression, wholly momentary, the girl's companion jostled. He was addressing the clerk:

"My name is Bundy: I wired from Philadelphia for a suite, and forgot to ask for a clergyman, also."

The clerk turned, examined some memoranda, turned again: "The suite will be ready shortly, Mr. Bundy."

"And the clergyman?"

The clerk shook his head. "We don't supply them." He hesitated, and resourcefully added: "The Reverend Doctor Manlius is here. He registered last night." A manicured finger shot out. "There he is now."

Hat in hand, head bent, eyes lowered, a clergyman was crossing the hall. His abundant dark hair, upturned, as if curled, at the edges, glistened a little, but his close-cut beard was dull, as was also his severe black coat.

At once Bundy accosted him. I could not hear what he said, but I could see the clergyman stop, raise his eyes, and look uncertainly at Bundy. Worship has many forms, the devout have many attitudes, but perhaps the greatest grace that religion confers is serenity. Momentarily, this gentleman appeared to lack it. But momentarily only. Immediately he straightened, stroked his rich hair, and murmured something.

Bundy turned to the beauty. "Margaret, this is Doctor Manlius. Doctor Manlius is unprepared. He has no service with him."

"I have one," the girl announced. That wonderful hat of hers inclined itself, and a gloved hand, entering the bowels of the silver dragon, produced a prayer book, bound in tortoise shell, clamped with gold. "I was reading it in the train," she continued. "I also read the burial service." She paused and oddly added: "I think I like it best."

But Bundy was in great good humor. "Everything in proper time," he cheerfully retorted.

Doctor Manlius coughed: "Ahem! Yes. Quite so."

"Well, then," Bundy spaciouly resumed. "We might——"

The rest of it was lost. I was about to intervene. Already I had taken aim. "Miss Dayce," I had it on the tip of my tongue to say, "Converse bids me tell you that the woman you saw in his arms is his sister."

But the thing missed fire. A different explosion occurred. Before me, a

page in blue and brass was bawling my name.

I stopped the boy, questioned, learned that I was wanted at the telephone, divined who was at the other end, and, a bit relieved—for, if I may boast, I am a poor hand at projectiles—entered a booth, where at once Converse was talking at me.

"They are not here," he huskily began. "Are they at the Waldorf?"

"Yes," I shouted back. "In the hall—with a clergyman in tow."

"What!"

"Some reverend rounder that Bundy has picked up here."

With an oath, Converse cleared his throat: "Detain them then. Introduce yourself to Margaret. Throw the bomb. Say I am coming."

I started to reply, but the connection was cut, and I could fancy Converse hastening mightily.

Meanwhile, there was work to be done, and, as I reentered the foyer, mentally I again took aim. Yet at once I realized that, however effective the high projectile would prove, it was for the moment useless.

The girl, the man, the cleric, all three had vanished, and I told myself that somewhere in the vast hotel they were then actively collaborating in that ceremony which is the oldest of human rites.

I rushed at the desk. "Mr. Bundy—from Philadelphia. Where is he? I must see him."

The clerk looked me over. "I hardly think he is disengaged at present." Cautiously and bleakly he smiled. "We have given him a sitting room while his suite is being prepared."

Impatiently I gestured. "It is life and death. I must see the young lady who is with him, and at once."

Again the clerk surveyed me. The cautious smile had gone. "Well, I'll send your name up."

I whipped out a card. "Say it's vital. Say——"

But the clerk had turned. In a moment, my card in his hand, I saw him directing an operator. Then, leisurely, behind a partition he disappeared.

When I next saw him he was at the other end of the desk, talking confidentially to a fat man. Several minutes had already intervened. Several others had previously elapsed. Since I had last seen the girl, fully ten minutes must have gone. The marriage service, I told myself, is brief—but lasting, and, in my brain, words kept running confusedly over themselves: "To have and to scold, to——"

"Not in, sir."

It was the clerk addressing me.

"Not in?" I amazedly repeated.

"Well, they don't answer." The bleak smiled reappeared. "I guess they're busy. Front!"

The clerk turned again. So far as he was concerned I had ceased to exist.

In sheer impotence, I also turned. Before me was the palm room, widely hospitable, enterable through many doors, but, at this hour, which was too early for tea, and too late for luncheon, untenanted.

Gloomily, I was contemplating the empty chairs and unoccupied tables, when, suddenly, Converse appeared.

He flew at me. "Where is she?"

I motioned at the ceiling. "In the bonds of matrimony."

He strangled an oath. "You didn't tell her?"

"I couldn't. While you were telephoning they gave me the slip. But I will tell you something. There is nothing better for the emotions than caviare and champagne. Let's have some."

"You are ridiculous with your caviare and your emotions," Converse snapped.

Appreciatively I nodded. "Let me offer you, then, some wisdom for food, some song for wine. The lady has left you. Let her go. There is wisdom. Here, now, is the wine. 'The grave of all things has its violet.' Quaff it."

I was but trying to calm the poor devil; trying, however stupidly, to get him to accept the inevitable. I might as well have attempted to supply him with conjectures on the orbits of sky-

larking comets. He ignored me utterly. With something almost terrieresque in his eagerness, he was pointing.

Beyond, through a lateral entrance of the palm room, that trio, at this moment, appeared.

"Now we are in for it!" I told myself, and, from the spectacle, turned to Converse again.

With a grimace, he turned to me. "Is that your clergyman?"

"Not mine at all," I was about to tell him, but he was so obviously preparing for action that, instead, I put a hand on his arm. "Don't," I admonished. "The greatest revenge is the disdain of any."

He shook me off. "You are ridiculous with your revenge."

As he spoke, he started, I following, toward the palm room, where already the three were seated, and where now a Greek omnibus was supplying them with great glasses of ice water.

The girl's back was toward us. She did not see our approach. The Greek did not care. But Bundy said something, the clergyman looked deeply into his glass, and that wonderful hat half turned. I had no time to notice more. We had reached the table. In the air now were the vibrations of hostilities begun.

Immediately Converse let go. "Margaret——"

Bundy rose at the charge. Instantly, insolently, and invincibly, he fired. "I will thank you to address my wife as Mrs. Bundy."

With that he had thought, perhaps, to bowl the foe over. Converse omitted to so much as blink. He was looking at the bride, who was looking at him. And what a look! Could eyes assassinate, hers would have killed. In their blight it occurred to me that for her to hate him to the death, she must also love him to distraction. But there was no love on exhibition then. Before her still was the affront of the moving picture.

That picture, with one lunge, Converse demolished. "Margaret, the woman you saw with me was my sis-

ter." Another crash followed. "What's more, Bundy knew it."

"I!" Bundy cried. "I——" The explosion had staggered him. His protest rang false. But the field was his. The girl was his wife. He fired again: "Sister or no sister——"

If any one heard, no one heeded. Manlius stood up. The bride, too, was rising. She was looking from Converse to Bundy, from Bundy to Converse.

Converse helped her: "You can't doubt me, but if you do, look at him."

She was looking. She looked as if looking on some dreadful dream. But she looked, too, as if she saw Bundy for the first time.

"I appear to have been tricked."

It was she who spoke. It was Manlius who answered: "Ahem! I think—really, I must be going."

But now Bundy had got back at it. "Sister or no sister," he was shouting, "you are married to me."

Yes, but there are marriages that can be annulled, I told myself, and was about to say as much to Converse, but Bundy had turned to him:

"As for you——"

"Don't run into excesses," Converse threw at him. "Nor you, either," he threw at Manlius. As he spoke, he looked the clergyman up and down. "The last time I saw you, sir, was in a Fifth Avenue bus. You were then quite bald."

"Really," Manlius expostulated, edging, as he spoke, away. "Really——"

Converse caught at him. "Now just tell this lady that she is not married."

"What infernal nonsense is this?" Bundy noisily protested.

But Converse, who, with one hand, was holding the cleric, with the other abruptly tore from him an opulent wig, a false if pointed beard; and there, even in the prelate's garb, even to me, perhaps, too, to Bundy, my old schoolmate Raritan, who had talked so agreeably of the Sicilian poets, and whom the police were seeking, stood revealed. I nodded at him, but he failed to notice.

"Converse," he was pleading, readjusting the while his disguise as best he could. "Converse, let me go."

Converse nodded. "Then tell this lady you are not a clergyman."

I turned to the girl. The Greek, open-mouthed, was staring. Bundy, his lips twisted with amazement and rage, was staring also. Suddenly, with an intake of the breath, he gulped and looked shiftily at Miss Dayce, who, limply, had sunk into a chair.

The fire had been a bit hot for her. Not one bomb only, but two, had exploded. There were ruins all about. In them an illusion had faded, and jealousy lay dead. There were ruins all about, but in them there was light.

"Tell her——" Converse was saying.

She half raised a hand. Her eyes had filled. Her lip quivered. "No. I can see. Let him go. And, perhaps, you will ask him to take—to take—him with him."

Her voice had broken, but it was bravely said, and, in the saying of it, she had drawn from a finger a ring which, her head averted, she extended behind her to where Bundy stood.

Bundy looked at her, at it. The ring fell, with a tinkle, on the floor. For a second his eyes followed it. But the tinkle must have sounded to him his finish. At once, with an uplift of the chin, he squared his shoulders, glanced at us, put his hat on, turned on his heel.

But it was still all a bit too much. Margaret bowed her head. A sob shook her.

Converse busied himself immediately. Caressingly his arm went about her. "There! There!" he said, much as though she were a baby. "We will have some of that caviare and champagne that I have been hearing about, and then we'll get a license of our own."

"Here," he interrupted himself to inquire. "Where's the waiter?" As he spoke, he turned to me. "Don't stand dawdling there. You make me nervous. Sit down; give us a toast."

"Gladly," I answered. "What shall it be?"

Converse laughed. "Why," he exclaimed, indicating the door through which his routed rival had gone. "What could it be except—*Sic transit gloria Bundy!*"

The DANCER IN SCARLET

by Clara Chapline Thomas



THE lights were turned down all over the theater, and a dull, red moon alone threw its light upon the stage. The dancer in scarlet glided into the rosy glow. As the expectant eyes of the audience rested upon her, there was a ripple of excitement whose outer circles widened even to the boxes, and caused a gentle, well-bred motion among the swishing silks and perfumed laces.

It was pantomime—the interpretation of an old fairy tale beloved for its sweet, wholesome quaintness, and yet, in its new guise, a sensuous mime that whetted jaded appetites by its voluptuous suggestiveness.

The sensation devotees, pleasure-loving Athenians that they were in their continual search for "some new thing," had indulged themselves in unwonted enthusiasm, and crowned—on the first night—the seductive dancer with the sobriquet of "The Living Flame." Now their followers of the matinee—more conservative, yet no whit less eager—fastened their eyes upon her with burning intentness; the murmuring voices grew fainter, and all were hushed.

The rhythm of the sensuous music, wrought into a living thing by the undulating grace of the dancer's movements, intoxicated them into a dreamy silence. Now the scarlet figure was the embodiment of a passionate joy; then a softer mood would conquer and create in those under the spell a mood of child-like sweetness.

The most enraptured of all the spectators sat in a box on the right. She was a tiny girl with a picture face, whose big eyes never swerved from the swaying scarlet figure. The little foot tapped in perfect time with the music, and now and then she smiled so happily that her companion in the chair at her side wondered. They were a great contrast, these two. They seemed to have almost nothing in common—the child, with her restless little body, and the quick color coming and going in her cheeks, sensitive lips that parted eagerly in pleasure or quivered with the minor strain of the music, deep, loving eyes, and full, pulsating throat; the woman beautiful, expressionless, cold, glancing languidly over the audience from time to time with heavy-lidded gaze.

Slower and slower the music grew; the lithe, supple body of the dancer swayed softly, sleepily—then sank lightly on a bed of soft moss. The child had ceased to tap her foot. She was resting her elbow on the railing of the box, and supporting her chin in the palm of her hand. Her eyes shone like stars; she held her breath. The climax of the pantomime had been reached—the dragon crept stealthily forth from his leafy retreat, and stood over the sleeping scarlet fairy, his evil eyes gloating upon her beauty with a lustful gaze that made even the hardened audience shiver slightly; lower and lower he bent his glittering eyes. Suddenly a wild cry rang from footlights to gal-

lery, and the little girl with the picture face jumped upon the stage.

"Don't you dare touch my beautiful fairy!" she cried, in clear, ringing tones, as she stamped her foot at the dragon. The audience broke into enthusiastic applause, and the curtain was hurriedly rung down.

The dancer in scarlet, now thoroughly awake, looked at the child in astonished amusement—then she drew a quick breath, and grew a shade paler under the rouge. The eyes—the hair—those spirited, quivering nostrils—the quick impulse of passion—how well she knew them! His child! She had been told that his wife was there—in the box on the right.

"Come with me, little one," she said, springing lightly to her feet; and the child, a little frightened now that self-consciousness had returned, shyly followed her. The dancer entered her dressing room and closed the door. Then she put her arm about the slender little body and drew the child close.

"Why did you do—that, dear?" she asked very gently.

"Because I loved you," was the shy answer. "I—I fought—maybe—he might hurt you!"

If she had not been a dancer of the type that, emotionless itself, lives by pandering to the emotions of others, one might have thought that there were tears in the woman's eyes. At any rate, she laid her hand on the child's head and looked at her steadily. It was a long time that she studied those features that she knew so well, but the honest, wondering eyes never left her face, and the lips parted finally in a friendly smile as a small rounded cheek suddenly pressed itself against hers. With a swift impulse, the woman snatched her close and held her so. This child had tried to protect her—his child! The child whom to-morrow all that gay world beyond the footlights would be pitying as fatherless! She could hear the careless comment from that world she knew so well. "What a blight upon a young life! His wife will bear up well—she isn't the sort that cares much, beyond the hurt to her

pride; but the child—well, the sins of the fathers, you know——" She shuddered and the clasp grew more tense.

The child stirred slightly, and the woman smiled down at her.

"And so," she said, in a voice that was very soft despite the throbbing in her throat "and so you didn't want me to be hurt?" She lifted the sweet little face and looked into it wistfully. "Dear," she murmured softly, "I wonder if you will ever know what you have done!"

Loosening the slender body until the small girl slipped to her feet, the woman moved to the shelf that served as a dressing table, and wrote rapidly on a half sheet of note paper which she tore from its fellow—covered with a masculine scrawl.

"Can you read?" she asked the child abruptly.

"No, but I can pwint my name," the little one replied proudly.

The dancer smiled. "That is just what I want you to do, sweetheart," she said gently. "Print your name—there—below this."

The child painfully obeyed; and the woman, watching her, smiled wistfully—she had not been wrong!

"I shall have to go on in a minute again," she said. "Then it will be over, and you will go home with—mamma—and you will not see me again. But I shall never forget you—and what you did this afternoon. It is a very wonderful thing—dear—to save any one." She held out a queer bracelet—a serpent of reddish gold with ruby eyes. "Take this," she said, and she spoke more as to a woman than to a child, "for it ought to belong to you—and think of me when you see it."

The child wonderingly obeyed. "Fank you berry much," she said quaintly. Then shyly: "I'd wike you to come wif me to my mamma. I fink I mus' go——"

The dancer gave an uncertain laugh. "I'm sorry," she said, "but I haven't the time." Just then the roar of the clapping was borne to them faintly. "I must go on—I'll send you back by the boy." She touched the child's fore-

head with her carmined lips, and smiled mockingly as she saw the tinge of scarlet left by the caress.

"She can take that off when you go back to her," she said bitterly. "I have saved you from a deeper scarlet stain than that. Bob," she called, as the boy poked his head in at the door "take this little girl back to the box on the right."

In answer to a wistful look from the child, she bent her head. Two little arms were slipped about her neck and she felt a soft kiss upon her cheek. Then the little one ran off happily, stopping once to look back and wave her hand at the scarlet figure in the doorway. The dancer looked after them until they were hidden by some excess shrubbery. Slowly she went back to the smeared mirror, and gazed earnestly at the reflection there. She touched her cheek reverently. It seemed to her that there was a little white spot there. "No," she said slowly, "you aren't all bad!" Then, with a resolute movement, she daubed rouge upon the cheek and turned away. "It is unfortunate that we have to cover up all of our white spots with rouge," she said.

That night a man waited long at the stage door, and finally inquired for the dancer in scarlet. He was a handsome man—with deep, dark eyes, and a sensitive mouth above a square chin. The sort of a man that women love.

The dancer had gone, he was told—but she had left a note for him. He took it eagerly and unfolded it.

BOY, DEAR: We both love you—and yet since only one of us can have you, we have decided that it shall be the one who needs you most. You, because you love us both, will abide by our choice. One of us knows that life is paint and tinsel and tawdry light—the other sees only the beauty. Help her not to find out.

It is hard—dearest—dearest—but it is best. Be strong and help us!

The man's hand trembled as he held it closer to read it in the dim light—and there was a mist blurring his eyes. They had told him of the afternoon—and he understood. Yet a gleam of something that is not often seen except in the eyes of a boy when he loves came into his eyes as he saw the signatures—one the scrawling, painful handwriting of his own child, and below it the name of the dancer in scarlet.



FEAR

WHERE Silence holds the world beneath its wings,

Where Life's artillery thunders in the mart,
With subtle force I shape within the heart
The good and evil destinies of things.
But I am one whose praises no one sings,
A power that men scorn and hold apart;
Yet many understand, too well, the art
Of Valor that my name, but mentioned, brings.

Oft I have made a coward heart grow brave
Because I made it ponder o'er its plight,
Until the world seemed but a place of eyes.
And it has been my lot true hearts to save,
To give them glimpses deep into the night,
To show them writings on the mist-hung skies.

GLENN WARD DRESBACH.



PLAYS AND PLAYERS

A FIRST NIGHTER

THERE has been more variety than usual, and some excellence, in New York's dramatic fare this month. If no single one of the productions has turned the still unfrozen Hudson to a river of fire, at least two or three have been seven days' wonders; that is, they have lived in the reviewers' minds from their opening Monday until the following Sabbath, serving for special articles in the Sunday drama sheets.

Perhaps the largest degree of this gentle disturbance has been caused by "Joseph and His Brethren," Louis Napoleon Parker's pageant play at the Century Theater. Considering where the chief drama lies, and where the chief hit was registered, "Joseph and His Brethren" should be called "Mrs. Potiphar."

From a careful observation of the kind and quality of the large audience at the matinee attended by the writer, it appeared that the research into the Scriptures that the play afforded was interesting principally because of the generous revelations of Mrs. Potiphar's beauty, made by Pauline Frederick. Less would have been a pity; more, the law would not have allowed. Miss Frederick deserves congratulations for having achieved so artistically the conceded limit. Such a perfect presentation of physical beauty executed in living alabaster has not been seen among us since lamented Lotta Faust danced *Salome*.

However, to leave Miss Frederick for the nonce—it is difficult—and turn to that nice young Israelite who is the intended lead in Mr. Parker's pageant play, *Joseph* is first seen as a bounding boy in his father's tents. He is of age, and *Jacob* has prepared gayeties for him and a coat of many colors.

These attentions rouse the envy of *Joseph's* ten brothers, or half brothers, the sons of *Leah* and *Billah*. *Joseph* further provokes his kindred by relating his dreams, dreams in which he sees them making obeisance to himself. This part of the play follows the scriptural tale closely. *Jacob* is played, and read, and grease-painted, and bewigged by James O'Neill in picturesquely patriarchal style.

James O'Neill is what sundry ultra-modern æsthetics—let us say Broadway's parcel-post impressionists—delight to relegate elsewhere with the phrases "old-school actor," "veteran of the days of strut and fret," et cetera. Howard Kyle, who plays *Simeon*, is another. There is no difficulty in picking them out of the cast, these "veterans" of a past art. You know them by their voices, clear, resonant, toneful, under perfect control—like a singer's—and by their varied, effortless elocution or reading, whereby every syllable, however rapidly and softly spoken, carries to the last row of the house. You know them, too, by their dignity of bearing, by the unity of their bodily movements, by the ability to walk in

sandals in a way that suggests the nomadic tribesman, not the matinee idol with military heels and a wasp waist.

Madame Helena Modjeska disposed of the "old-school" and "new-school" nonsense with a clear-cut finality that makes her words pertinent at all times. She said: "There is no old school and no new school of acting. There is only good acting and bad acting! In all periods there have been artists who played the classics, and inferior actors who appeared in the classics. In all periods there have been artists who played the modern plays of their period, and inferior actors who appeared in the modern plays of their period; and generally the best players in both classical and modern rôles have been the same players. The histories of the stage in all countries tell us this very plainly. There has always been authentic criticism and superficial report. There has always been Art and its poor counterfeit. Unfortunately, bad acting does not belong to any school, or we might have the school suppressed! I have no patience with these superficial writers and talkers on the theater who think they have invented the word 'modern,' and that they are really saying something when they use these phrases, 'old school' and 'new school' in relation to acting."

We are moved to harp on this string because the performance we attended was the third Saturday matinee—in this case, the fifteenth performance, as the piece opened on a Saturday—and most of the voices had gone hoarse already. Love speeches came huskily through the moonlight, deaths were plotted, and revenges vowed in three keys, and portions of phrases disappeared voicelessly into the ether.

Of course, the Century Theater is very large. Ever since the house was first opened as the New Theater, it has been blamed for this sort of thing. Be it noted, however, we had no trouble whatever in hearing Mr. O'Neill in his two rôles of *Jacob* and *Pharaoh*; nor Mr. Kyle as *Simcon*. They were not hoarse. But by all means blame the Century Theater, lest it should appear that most of our younger players do

not know the fundamentals of their art. Inevitably one pauses occasionally to wonder why men and women elect to enter a profession when they do not honor it enough to prepare themselves adequately for it.

After the ceremony of coat-giving, *Joseph* departs to join his brethren at the Wells of Dothan. This is a very lovely scene. The desert stretches away from the little, palm-decked oasis, and off into the golden distance. It is heavy and strange with the yellow light of a cloudless, brazen sky over vastes of sand. Travelers go by on asses and camels. There is brief marketing and exchange of food, and water, and wares.

Joseph arrives upon the scene, and is shortly thrown into a dried well, turned snake pit, by his envious kindred. There passes a cavalcade of Egyptians, escorting the lady *Zuleika*—pronounced to rhyme with you-like-her—to the Nile country, to be joined in holy wedlock with one *Potiphar*, a captain in *Pharaoh's* army.

While the Egyptians and the Israelites are arguing about the water rights of Dothan, the voice of *Joseph* is heard praying in the well. The lady *Zuleika* orders him drawn out and slain, because he has blasphemed her gods by praying to Jah. *Joseph* is pulled up, bespattered with green mud; his many-colored coat is stripped from his shoulders, the knife of a ferocious Ishmaelite is poised above his breast.

The lady coos from behind the curtains of her palanquin that she wishes to see the operation. At a full sight of *Joseph's* face, not her heart, but her senses relent. She buys him of his brothers for twenty silver pieces, ostensibly as a love gift for *Potiphar*. "He shall be my lord's slave—and mine," is her dulcet remark as the cavalcade goes on its way across the shining sand.

Simcon kills a lamb and dips the coat in its blood. Thus bedaubed, the coat is cast at *Jacob's* feet. "This have we found. Know now whether it be thy son's coat or not."

Except in the introduction of *Zu-*

leika, Mr. Parker adheres closely to the biblical narrative, but his own phrases are frequently out of the atmosphere and period.

Next is shown the porch or first room in the house of *Potiphar*. Between great pillars we view a beautiful scene—it may be a temple on the bank of the river, seen through an arbor of rich coloring. Gayly garmented servants are moving about making ready for the bride. *Joseph* is active among them, the favored slave, because he is the gift of *Zuleika*.

The happy couple arrives in due course. *Potiphar* is a rugged soldier, no longer young. Mrs. *Potiphar* is in robes of unutterable wonder. Great snakelike bands of gold, and silver, and jewels wind around her sinuous person on a woof of black. She wears a heavy gold headdress, with large disks over her ears. Her thick, black hair falls to her knees.

Miss Frederick's facial make-up is excellent in its suggestion of a rattlesnake. The whole face tapers away triangularly from the large, brilliant, slant eyes. The hard black line round the eyes gives them an unnatural glitter. The skin is very white, sinister in its illusion of deathly pallor. The mouth and chin seem very small and sharp. In her make-up and costuming of the part, Miss Frederick has certainly scored an achievement, no less than in her playing of it. She seems not so much an evil woman as the incarnate lure of traitorous desire, serpentine across the paths of forward-marching men.

The lines that the author has given her to say are trite, unpoetic, uninspired, and rather modern; and she does not read them with true conviction, variety, or authority. Her reading is the one serious defect in her performance, showing her lack of grounding in the principles of the histrionic art. The character itself appears to the writer to have been politely lifted from Wilde's *Salome*.

Ere *Potiphar* can embrace his bride, *Pharaoh* sends him to war. He leaves *Joseph* overlord of his household, prom-

ising him freedom on his victorious return. Meanwhile, we have had a moment or two of seeing *Joseph* expressing humble adoration for *Asenath*, daughter of the chief priest, and she has hinted that she will look kindly upon him when he is free.

There follows a moonlit garden scene under the shadow of a gigantic sphinx, where *Joseph* and *Asenath* breathe vows of love, literally with broken voices. Then comes the temptation in the apartments of Mrs. *Potiphar* in that darkest hour before the dawn.

Zuleika has been conjuring him with prayers to Astarte, and divinations and crystal gazings, and has brewed a very wicked love potion. We see her most gracefully intent upon these exercises. A false message of danger brings *Joseph*, and we have the temptation, so briefly recorded in the Bible, but elaborated into almost an act by Mr. Parker.

Miss Frederick is a discreet temptress. She plays the scene, which is precisely like ninety-nine out of every hundred such scenes, with refinement. She does not send her beauty to his brain like a bludgeon, as most charmers do in rôles of the sort.

The return of *Potiphar*, and *Zuleika's* most unkind lie, the imprisonment of *Joseph*, the interpretation of the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker in the prison—Genesis 40—the bringing forth of *Joseph* to interpret *Pharaoh's* dreams, and his advancement to the chief post over the kingdom, follow in their biblical order.

The most beautiful scene is the desert by night, with a corner of Cheops' pyramid showing. White, clear-cut stars hang low in an indigo sky, and the desert, billowed with darkness, rolls out to infinite horizons, silent with the mystery of that Omnipresence which alone "laid the measures thereof, and knoweth the place where light dwelleth."

It is a grief that this setting is used for so inappropriate and trivial a melodramatic effect as the blinding of Mrs. *Potiphar* by her too-long blind husband.

"Years of Discretion," at the Belasco Theater, is one of the successes that deserve to be. It is a comedy touched with farce—slightly over-touched in places—and it is by Frederick and Fanny Hatton. Mr. Hatton is well and widely known as "the critic" of the Chicago *Evening Post*. His reviews have always impressed by their fairness, intelligence, and literary quality. They have done a service for the art of the theater. It is pleasantly perceived that Mr. Hatton—plus Mrs. Hatton—has larger talents than a critical column on a paper can show forth. "Years of Discretion" has bright lines in abundance, but it has something better than bright lines, and rare. It has original ideas, genuine character depiction, moments of quiet, true feeling, and superb comedy scenes.

Ella Howard, a Brookline, Massachusetts, widow of forty-eight years, runs away to New York to have "experiences." She has been suppressed all her life. She craves her fling. She has money enough to buy youth's lovely outside as well as other things craved by millionaires. She runs away from her model son, provides herself with sixteen "model" gowns instead, and descends upon her friend, *Margaret Brinton*, demanding all that that lady's position and savoir-faire can do for her in providing opportunities for mirth and joy, for flirtation and its sweet dangers, for love and "life."

She modestly desires to live twenty years in six months or so.

Mrs. Brinton introduces to her *Amos Thomas*, a parlor theorist on the *Cosmos*, whose emotional tastes cause him to name himself "a varietist"; *Christopher Dallas*, a fascinating globe-trotter; and *Michael Doyle*, a blarneying Celt with cave-man propensities. There is also *Mrs. Brinton's* own faithful lover, a step into the fifties like the other three.

The three men fall in love, in varying degrees, with the "younged" and beautified *Ella*. The parlor anarchist—oh, what a beautifully written part he is!—

waxes bomblike in his attentions, and, when denied, climbs the fire escape and threatens her from behind the window box for geraniums. The Irishman loses his head and seizes her in an embrace of the tertiary period. These two aspects of New York bring out Brookline, Massachusetts. *Ella* has told her prim son that "veneration and respect are not among the interesting emotions," but she finds herself instinctively rejecting love when offered without them.

It is *Dallas*, or "*Dal*," into whose arms the Brookline lady gently and restfully declines at the end of the second act.

The third act transpires in her rose garden in Brookline, an hour after the wedding. The garden is a floral rhapsody, a real old garden, where the vines and plants are cared for lovingly in their wanderings over walls and trellises, but not badgered and arbitrarily hindered from fulfilling their gently venturesome inclinations.

Ella belongs in such a garden, and we are not surprised to see her make there her sweet, plaintive confession to her bridegroom, that she is no longer young, that she cannot go upon that eighteen-month tour of the world, and that she cannot wear her eighteen-inch corset another day, or her number three shoes.

Dal, relieved by her revelations, lets out his belt, puts on his spectacles, and dares to nap comfortably in an easy-chair while *Ella* is divesting herself of former aids to conquest.

The soft summer moonlight brings out their middle-aged serenity in artistic relief against the old, old wall, with its clamber of roses. If the young dreams and too late born desires have fled, you feel that it is love—true love, love that will not pass—that has been born in that fair, wholesomely perfumed old garden, where the shams were put off. The play is splendidly acted by Effie Shannon—a most lovely, appealing *Ella*—Lyn Harding—*Dallas*—Robert McWade—the anarchist—E. M. Holland, Bruce McCrea—the Irishman—and Herbert Kelcey.



FOR BOOK LOVERS

THEODORE DREISER'S last book, "The Financier," published by Harper & Brothers, is the most important work he has done, so far.

This time he has taken a more varied and stirring theme, and has devoted himself to the study of a man instead of to a "Sister Carrie" or a "Jennie Gerhardt." Like Balsac, he has a taste for a big canvas, and he paints upon it boldly the figure of Frank Cowperwood.

But although he bestows any amount of study and analysis upon the type of man he seeks to present, his background apparently interests him quite as much. He sees an infinite wealth of detail, a crowd of people, and it all seems important to him, a part of the composition; but much of it, although interesting, and often valuable, is almost wholly extraneous.

It may be that, in the future, an epic of American history will be written of the genius and development of a group of financiers, the conditions that created them, and the marvels they accomplished. Mr. Dreiser has seen this opportunity, and seized it. He shows, dramatically and, one feels, truthfully, the ideals and desires that animated Cowperwood, the circumstances and environment that molded him. He has depicted every step of his hero's rise, of his fall, and of his phoenixlike emergence from his ashes. He has portrayed the part women played in his life—a not inconsiderable part, by the way—and in this carefully worked-out novel has shown sincerity, and a distinct, although certainly not overwhelming, power as a novelist.

One of the best adventure stories that has appeared in some time is "The Drifting Diamond," by Lincoln Colcord, published by the Macmillan Company.

Mr. Colcord has really succeeded in giving us something new, and so satisfies, to that extent, the present demand. The theme of the story is the psychic effect produced by the wonderful Penang diamond, originally the property of the Maharajah of Pancore; a baleful stone that rouses, in every one who sees it, the craze for possession. "Its history vanishes into remote time. Many have loved it, and much crime has been committed in its name."

The story is told by Captain Nichols, of the steamship *Omega*. A well-born young Englishman, who has just paid twenty thousand pounds for the gem, brings it on board the *Omega*, and is followed by agents of the maharajah, who seek to recover it. Their efforts are frustrated by Lee Fu, a wealthy and crafty old Chinaman. In the midst of a threatened mutiny the ship runs into a typhoon in the China Sea, of which a thrillingly realistic description is given. To quiet the elements, as well as the crew, the diamond is sealed in a bottle and thrown overboard.

The rest of the story is devoted to the exciting adventures that attend the constant reappearance of the stone.

Years afterward it returns to the Englishman, who has, in the meantime, married. With the sight of it his mania for it returns. Again on board the *Omega*, this time with his wife, he holds it in his hand. But now she, uninfluenced by it, takes it from him and,

in spite of the protests of those about her, coolly flings it into the sea.

Mr. Colcord has told his story admirably. He has used Captain Nichols, a veteran sea captain, with much effect, to impress the reader with sincerity, and to carry conviction and sustain the interest.



Leonard Merrick's new book, "This Stage of Fools," published by Mitchell Kennerley, is a volume of short stories of varying merit.

We can think of no other modern writer who is quite so individually delightful as Mr. Merrick at his best, and the disappointment is proportionately keen when he falls below his own standard, as he does in some of these tales.

The first story, really a novelette, "The Laurels and the Lady," is the best of the collection. It is a vivid and unusual tale, almost poignantly pathetic, yet with a not unhappy ending. If one wishes to be hypercritical, objection may be made to this story as lacking plausibility, but those who really love a good story, will never think of this, but accept thankfully what Mr. Merrick has given them.



"Meadowsweet," by Baroness Orczy, published by Hodder & Stoughton, is noteworthy principally because it is a revival of the old-fashioned romance, and it must be added that the author has done her work with considerable skill. For, while her gift is characterization rather than construction, she has a plot that is adequate, if not new.

Meadowsweet is the name given the heroine by her lover, a decided improvement on Boadacia, the name bestowed by her sponsors in baptism. She is a typical hoyden, born and bred in the country, wild as a young colt, but, like the hoydens of fiction, young, beautiful, generous, and warm-hearted.

Her lover, Lieutenant Carrington, of the royal navy, is also a familiar type

—a handsome, gallant young sailor. The course of their true love is disturbed by the machinations of a wicked sister, who, desiring the dashing lieutenant for herself, succeeds in sowing suspicions in the minds of the lovers, and eventually parting them.

But this is not the whole story. Enough has been said, however, to stimulate the interest of lovers of romance, and we are unwilling to mar their pleasures of anticipation as to the outcome by disclosing more of the plot.

The setting of the story is quaint and attractive, the atmosphere charming, and the minor characters are clearly defined, and lifelike, adding, as they should, the necessary variety and interest.



"The Outposts of Eternity," by Cosmo Hamilton, published by D. Appleton & Co., is put out as a "study" in degeneracy. It is, however, too hastily written for even a superficial review of what is surely a grave subject, and "study" is too weighty a term to be applied to it.

Of the family of four, which the author has chosen for the purpose of embodying his "study," Anthony Okehampton, in whose veins flows some of England's best blood, is a confirmed drunkard; his wife, a well-born and brilliant woman, is a morphine maniac; the daughters, entirely lacking in morals or education, are cigarette fiends, with a pronounced taste for French liquors. Their companions are old and young rōus. The one decent character in the book, a young man, is presented as a fine type of the clean-minded young Englishman, but he shows such weakness for one of the Okehampton girls, that we doubt the flattering estimate made of him by the author.

The book leaves one with a singularly bad taste in the mouth. It is written with a certain smartness and dash, but the characterization is faulty, the incidents are obviously manufactured to make "good situations," and the people are so inconceivably vicious, that, in-

stead of being revolting, they are only funny. And, worst of all, the author writes with his tongue in his cheek, an insult that readers find hard to forgive.



"Beauty and the Jacobin," by Booth Tarkington, published by Harper & Brothers, is a dainty, clever romance, dealing with a beautiful shrew, her lover, and his sister, high-born refugees, seeking to escape from France, and the "Reign of Terror." The taming of this hot-tempered and haughty lady is accomplished by one Valsin, a man of impish humor and sardonic wit. The passages between them are the most noteworthy things in the book.

As the years go on, Mr. Tarkington shows that his pen has lost nothing of its skill and color, wit and tenderness, all of the qualities that have placed him so high among modern authors; but "Monsieur Beaucaire" was so nearly perfect that another fantasy of the same general type is sure to be unfavorably contrasted with it.

Why this craze to "come back"? When an author, having achieved one masterpiece, attempts to follow it with another in the same vein, it seems as if he were obsessed by a haunting desire to convince himself that the first suc-

cess was not a mere fluke, to prove to the world that he can do the same thing again and again. But the chances are against it, as Mr. Tarkington has shown in "Beauty and the Jacobin."



Important New Books

- "One Woman's Life," Robert Herrick; Macmillan Co.
- "My Little Sister," Elizabeth Robins; Dodd, Mead & Co.
- "Adnam's Orchard," Sarah Grand; D. Appleton & Co.
- "Ranching for Sylvia," Harold Bindloss; F. A. Stokes Co.
- "Poor Dear Margaret Kirby," Kathleen Norris; Macmillan Co.
- "The Night Riders," Ridgwell Cullum; Geo. W. Jacobs Co.
- "The Eternal Maiden," T. Everett Harvé; Mitchell Kennerley.
- "General Mallock's Shadow," W. B. Maxwell; D. Appleton & Co.
- "The Happy Warrior," A. S. M. Hutchinson; Little, Brown & Co.
- "Bunker Bean," Harry Leon Wilson; Doubleday, Page & Co.
- "The Shadow," Arthur Stringer; Century Co.
- "The Inside of the Cup," Winston Churchill; Macmillan Co.
- "The Ghost Girl," Henry Ketchell Webster; D. Appleton & Co.
- "Vanishing Points," Alice Brown; Macmillan Co.
- "Zone Policeman 88," Harry A. Franck; Century Co.



KNOWLEDGE

WHO guesses at the dawn's first ray
The tragic import of the day?
Who dreams, at eve's oncreep, to see
Some laugh-lit human comedy?

The fates o'erthrow with ruthless hand
What the most patient plodder planned;
When all is summed up here below,
We know but this: *we do not know!*

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

Talks With Ainslee's Readers

AN author who has frequently contributed to your entertainment with her short stories recently asked us what sort of a novelette we liked best for AINSLEE'S. "I have been reading them, as you suggested," she writes—"Marion Hill, Anne Warwick, Henry C. Rowland, Hornung, Kate Jordan, Harold MacGrath, and Marie Van Vorst. But while I have derived a great deal of pleasure, I fear I am as much in the dark as ever as to what you really want. They are all so different."

There, the lady herself has answered her own question. We want stories that are "different" for our novelettes. The most ardent devotee of glass-ball juggling would hardly enjoy a vaudeville program made up of twelve successive acts of glass-ball juggling, be the feats performed ever so wonderful. If the whole wide world were all like Penn's Neck, New Jersey—and Penn's Neck is a charming little settlement—there wouldn't be any attraction in travel. Variety is the secret of every form of entertainment. A magazine, to entertain, must be "different." The moment it ceases being different it becomes indifferent.

Compare Kate Trimble Sharber's novel in the present number with "The Pyjama Man" in the March AINSLEE'S. They differ widely in style, atmosphere, characterization, and plot. And the novelette for the coming issue, "The Crimson Flower," by Alma Martin Estabrook, is as different from each of these as they are different from each other. Yet every one of the three appeals to us as a good AINSLEE'S novelette.

THE CRIMSON FLOWER" is a Western story. Over the most familiar type of Western story we become anything but enthusiastic. The mere mention of them conjures up lurid visions of wild-West-show cowboys furiously giving way to violence

while they wade around knee-deep in mires of local color that has been filched from the curio-shop Indians, who cater to the tourist trade along the railroads. But this story that we have is a real romance of the real West. It is full of the exhilarating sparkle of a winter day in Arizona, and possesses all the big sweep of the wide desert lands on which it is set.

THE dozen or more short stories in the May AINSLEE'S give the number a rare blend of strength and charm. Herman Whitaker has never given us a more dramatic tale of old Mexico than "The Greaser."

Mary Heaton Vorse, in "The Meaning of Life," tells, with a quiet, gripping power, of the love of a book-bred, tradition-cooled, convention-bound New England girl for a graceful, hot-blooded Portuguese boy of the Provincetown fishing fleet.

In "The Secret," F. Berkeley Smith writes with characteristic color and atmosphere of a tragedy in the lives of a gruff, old duck-shooting baron and his beautiful young Parisian wife. The story is laid on the Norman coast, near the scene of one of Mr. Smith's best-known books, "The Village of Vagabonds."

A fourth story of unusual strength in the May number is "A Modern Galahad," by Andrew Soutar. Do you remember this author's adventures of "The Marquis," in AINSLEE'S? The central figure of this coming story possesses much of the same quixotic spirit that made Mr. Soutar's former hero so lovable. This youth, with the soul of an old-time knight and a wisdom unspoiled by sophistication, falls deeply in love with an actress, middle-aged, disappointed, and married. The manner in which he enters her life, the inspiration each gives the other in the few times they meet, and the boy's chivalrous delicacy at the end, all combine to make a story of rare appeal and distinction.

IT has not been necessary, however, in order to make this next number an unusually strong one, to neglect stories dependent for their appeal upon grace and charm. Without them AINSLEE'S would not be AINSLEE'S.

George Weston, although probably known to you through his work in other magazines, makes his first appearance in "the magazine that entertains," in the May issue, with fascinating romance entitled "Fancylawe the Fanciful." Upon reading it we straightway arranged with the author to follow it up with another story in the same vein. Mr. Weston's work is the sort that occasionally prompts our readers to ask us why we don't print more stories like this one or that one. We respectfully pass the question on to the writer craft. Why don't you write more stories like Marie Van Vorst's, Nina Wilcox Putnam's, Anna Alice Chapin's, and George Weston's?

J. J. Bell, best known, perhaps, as the creator of "Wee Macgreegor," writes delightfully of a whimsical English artist, who, armed only with his sketching block and flute, tramps abroad in search of "The One Woman in the World." Methodical people with a passion for card indexes will prob-

ably file Mr. Bell's tale under the head of "Zenda stories" as soon as the spell of it wears off sufficiently.



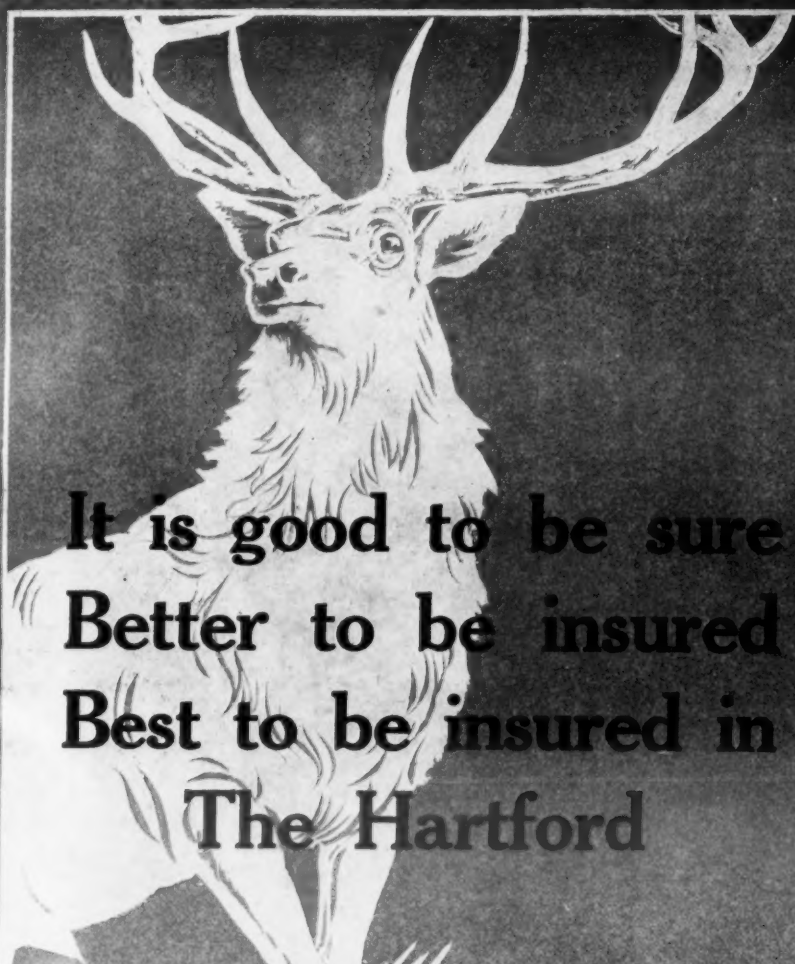
EDGAR SALTUS' contribution for May, "The Plot," is a most amusing tale. It is full of the author's best work, and, although he, from time to time, expresses boredom with his own narrative as it goes along we defy others to do so.

Horace Fish, in the May number, gives us another of his exquisite stories of Terassa. This one is a love tale, in which one of the old Spanish padre's little orphan boys proves an astonishingly explosive, but lovable, Cupid. "Instrumento" is its title.

In the same number you will find a charming romance by Victor Bridges, entitled "The Cruise of the Scandal"; a most unusual and significant little yarn called "The Gray Goose," by C. Hilton-Turvey; and continuations of the entertaining series that Joseph Ernest and Anna Alice Chapin are doing for us.

It's a thoroughly entertaining number, this next AINSLEE'S. In our opinion it's every bit as good as the March issue, which you liked so well.





**It is good to be sure
Better to be insured
Best to be insured in
The Hartford**

**HARTFORD FIRE INSURANCE
COMPANY, HARTFORD, CONN.**

AGENTS EVERYWHERE



The illustration shows a hand holding a single rectangular Nabisco wafer with the brand name embossed on it. Below, an open box of Nabisco Sugar Wafers is shown, revealing the wafers inside. The box also has the Nabisco logo and name on its side. The entire scene is framed by a decorative, ornate border.

NABISCO Sugar Wafers

Convenient in form, attractive in appearance, deliciously sweet, delightful in flavor and goodness. These are the attributes that make Nabisco Sugar Wafers the most tempting of dessert confections. In ten-cent tins; also in twenty-five-cent tins.

ADORA:—The newest dessert confection—a filled sugar wafer—enticingly sweet.

FESTINO:—An almond-shaped dessert confection with the most exquisite of creamy centers.

CHOCOLATE TOKENS:—A delectable confection covered with sweet, rich chocolate.

**NATIONAL
BISCUIT
COMPANY**

Balanced heating guaranteed!

Even after you're sure "Winter's backbone is broken," there's the long period which comes between the last snow and the first green that is *most trying*—with raw, searching winds, chill rains, and penetrating fogs and dampness. Then's the time of extremes—under- and over-heating—fuel wastes—that's when old-fashioned heating methods are drains on patience and purse. To protect in any weather, day and night, by *balanced heating*, absolute control in even comfort—is the mission and guaranty of

AMERICAN & IDEAL RADIATORS & BOILERS



An IDEAL Boiler will burn least fuel because it is unnecessary to force the fire to send heat to windward rooms—the more heat needed the faster will be the flow of warmth to the AMERICAN Radiators to offset the cold. All IDEAL Boilers are or may be fitted with an IDEAL Sylphon Regitherm, which gives perfect automatic control over the draft and check dampers, insuring great fuel economy and uniform heating. Saves running up and down the cellar stairs during quick-changing weather. It is the greatest improvement made in a century for exact control of the volume of heat.



A No. 3015 IDEAL Boiler and 125 sq. ft. of 36-in. AMERICAN Radiators, costing the owner \$125, were used to heat this cottage. At this price the goods can be bought of any reputable, competent fitter. This does not include costs of labor, pipe, valves, freight, etc., which are extra, and vary according to climatic and other conditions.

The practical values and every-day economies, conveniences and cleanliness of these heating outfits have been demonstrated in thousands of notable buildings, homes, stores, schools, churches, hospitals, theaters, etc., in nearly every civilized country, and endorsed by leading health officials, engineers, and architects.

That is why IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators are so fully *guaranteed*. Yet they cost no more than ordinary types made without scientific tests of construction and capacity.

IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators do not corrode, warp or rust out by action of fire, gases or water—will last scores of years! Their purchase price is a far-sighted investment, adding 10% to 15% to rentals, and you get "full money back" if building is sold.

If Spring winds are now showing how comfortless and costly your present system is, write us today for (free) book—"Ideal Heating"—which shows how to put "an armor of balanced heating comfort" around your building and save fuel.

Public Showrooms
in all large cities

AMERICAN RADIATOR COMPANY

Write to Dept. 39
Chicago



Jack London

has just finished the best story he ever wrote.

He thinks so himself and those who have read the manuscript agree with him. He has been working on it five years.

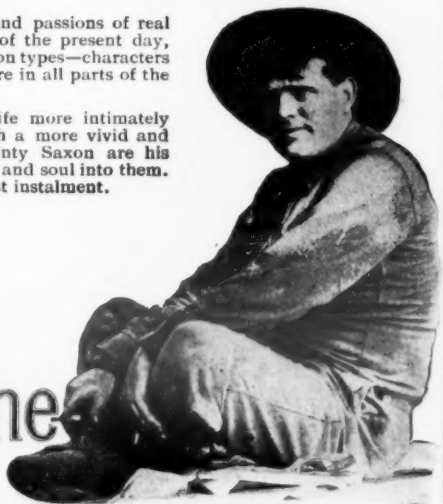
This great novel will begin in the April number of the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. Read it, if you delighted in the red-blooded exploits of Smoke Bellew. Read it for one of the most surprising — most touching — love stories that ever appeared in print. It is superbly illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy.

Jack London will write exclusively for the Cosmopolitan during the next five years. Another of America's greatest authors—exclusively—for 'America's Greatest Magazine'; another example of the Cosmopolitan's policy: the best—and only the best—at any price.

"The Valley of the Moon"

deals with the hopes, ambitions, loves and passions of real Americans; full-blooded, live Americans of the present day, in our big cities. They are true Jack London types—characters that have made his novels go like wild-fire in all parts of the country.

No writer living knows unconventional life more intimately than Jack London, or describes it with a more vivid and forceful pen. Big Bill Roberts and dainty Saxon are his latest creations—he has put his own heart and soul into them. Don't miss the dance-hall scene in the first instalment.



The April
Cosmopolitan
Magazine

Pin a dollar bill to this coupon, fill in your name and address, send it to us at our risk, and get the *Cosmopolitan* with Jack London's story for 8 months. We will gladly give you the dollar back, if you don't think the story alone is worth the price.

COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

For one dollar enclosed please enter my trial subscription to the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for 8 months, beginning with the April Number, containing the opening chapters of "The Valley of the Moon."

Ainslee's 4-13

Name.....

Address

Ready-Made Breakfasts

Delivered at your door
Ready to Eat

That's the modern way—easy for the housewife—brings satisfaction to the family table.

When you order a package of

Post Toasties

from the grocer, you secure a delicious dish for breakfast, lunch or supper without worry, and at trifling cost.

These tasty crisps of toasted Indian Corn, dainty in flavour and rich in nourishment, add pleasure to any meal.

Tempting and Sweet—Ready to Eat.

Sold by Grocers everywhere.



In 1918—What?

By R. E. Olds, Designer

Many a car will run well for a summer. But how will it run in five years from now? And what will it cost in the meantime?

Those are the main questions in motor car buying. It is the second summer that shows up a poor car. But it may take five seasons to really prove out a good one.

For 26 years men have used cars of my building. And thousands of these men know how my cars perform after five years or more of use.

Reo the Fifth is my latest car. But all its prestige is based on ancient experience. My cars today are judged mainly by records, covering many years.

And, because of those records, this factory of ours rarely catches up with its orders.

What I Know

I know that steel, unless proved by analysis, often falls short of re-

quirements. So we analyze each lot twice.

I know that gears can't be properly proved with a hammer. So we use a 50-ton crushing machine.

I know that all driving parts should have big over-capacity. So we add 50 per cent margin of safety.

I know that steel castings often have flaws. So in Reo the Fifth we use 190 drop forgings. They cost twice what castings cost.

I know that ball bearings often fall down. So we use in this car 15 roller bearings. Common ball bearings would cost one-fifth as much.

I know that oversize tires mean enormous economy. So we use tires 34x4.

A carburetor should be doubly heated. So we use hot air and hot water both.

We use a \$75 magneto.

A costly centrifugal pump.

Radical Tests

I know that we can't be too cautious. So every car gets countless tests and inspections. We discard any part for the slightest shortcoming.

Each engine is given five radical tests, lasting for 48 hours.

Important parts are hand-fitted. They are ground over and over until we get utter exactness. We limit our output to 50 cars daily, so our men are never hurried.

As a result, every Reo the Fifth goes out a perfect car.

Rough-Road Cars

All these extremes add about \$200 to the necessary cost of each car. They probably save, on the average, \$500 during the life of the car.

They save in tire upkeep, in repairs and replacements. And they keep a car running as well as new after years and years of use.

There is no other way to make a car fit for use on American roads. One must have big brakes, big springs, big tires. One needs immense overcapacity. Drop forgings, roller bearings, tested materials—all these things are needed.

I would never buy a car built otherwise, so I shall never build one.

Our One-Rod Control

In Reo the Fifth, all the gear shifting is done by one center rod, placed out of one's way. It is done by moving this rod only three inches in each of four directions.

There are no levers, side or center. Both brakes are operated by foot pedals. So both front doors are clear. And this car, like all leading cars, has the left side drive.

This simple control is immensely desirable. See how much it means.

body, luxurious upholstery of genuine leather, electric lights, nickel trimmings.

The extra cost of our hidden parts is made up by factory efficiency. We build all our own parts. We build only one model. That fact alone saves us 20 per cent.

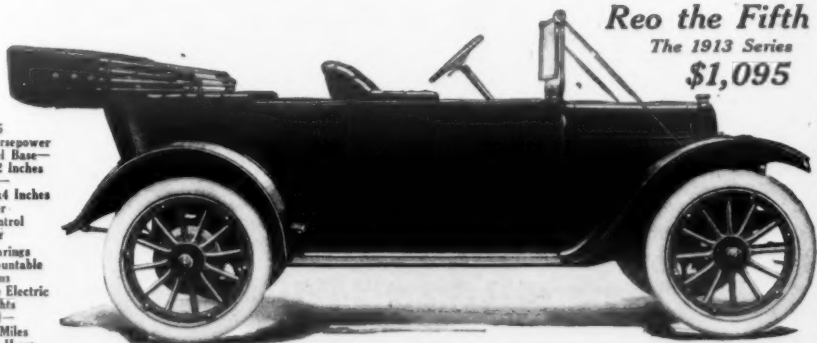
That's why a car built as we build it can be sold at the Reo price. It offers unmatched value.

Sold by a thousand dealers.
Write for our 1913 catalog and we'll direct you to the nearest show-room.

This car has a 17-coated

R. M. Owen & Co. General Sales Agents for **Reo Motor Car Co., Lansing, Mich.**
Canadian Factory, St. Catharines, Ont.

30-35
Horsepower
Wheel Base—
112 inches
Tires—
34x4 inches
Center
Control
Roller
Bearings
Demountable
Rims
Three Electric
Lights
Speed—
45 Miles
per Hour
Made with
5 and 2
Passenger
Bodies



Reo the Fifth
The 1913 Series
\$1,095

Top and windshield not included in price. We equip this car with mohair top, side curtains and slip cover, windshield, gas tank for headlights, speedometer, self-starter, extra rim and brackets—all for \$100 extra (list price \$170).

Gray & Davis Electric Lighting and Starting System at an extra price, if wanted.

(168)

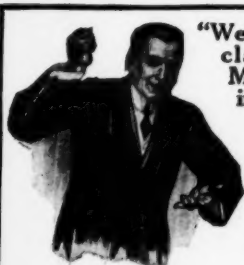
Is your appearance?
worth a postal?

*The advanced
spring, and
summer styles
are shown and
it contains a
useful dress
chart*

ADLER-ROCHESTER
STYLE BOOK

simply send your address to—

L. ADLER BROS. & Co.
ROCHESTER, N.Y., U. S. A.



**"We make so many
claims for our
Mennen's Shav-
ing Cream, that
they almost
seem ridicu-
lous—but the
pleasant fea-
ture of it is,
we can back
up every one
of them."**

Put our cream to the test, and prove for
yourself that it will do all we claim for it, and
even more.

Mennen's Shaving Cream solves all the big
and little troubles of shaving.

Try it at our expense—write today for a free
sample. Gerhard Mennen Co., Newark, N. J.

Mennen's Shaving Cream



Makers of the celebrated Mennen's Borated Talcum Toilet Powder

"CARNWATH."

Estate of REGINALD W. RIVES at New Hamburg,
Dutchess County, New York.

One and one half miles south of New Hamburg station and sixty-
four miles distant from New York on the New York Central &
Hudson River Railroad. Elevation 200 to 300 feet above the river.
Total acreage 203,—50 acres in lawns and gardens, 150 acres of
farm lands under highest state of cultivation. Two miles of drives,
one mile of Hudson River front, twenty-four miles of river view (17
North and 7 South). All grounds in perfect order, with unusually
fine trees. State road between New York and Albany passes this
property.

Buildings include: Brick dwelling, 12 masters rooms, 8 servants
rooms, 3 bath rooms, cellar under entire house, lighted by Acetylene
gas, two furnaces, running water. Modern and up-to-date green
houses. Large brick and stone stable (12 horses), running water,
commodious apartments for coachman and grooms above. Gard-
ener's house. Manager's house. Barns for 40 head of dairy cattle.
Front and back lodges. Brick farm stables, containing 13 box stalls
and wagon shed. Artesian wells and wind mills provide an inex-
haustable supply of water to all parts of this property.



You Can Build This Handsome Power Boat

ONLY \$28 for knockdown frames, patterns and instruc-
tions for this 23 footer—speed 9½ to 14 miles an hour.
Everything made simple. Easy to build if you can han-
dle hammer, saw and screw driver. We also furnish complete
knock-down boat. Or patterns alone at from \$2 to \$12 accord-
ing to design. Thousands of Brooks boats in use and building
now. It's fun—and profit—and real pleasure to build a boat.
Write for Brooks Boat Book today—just a postal. Mailed free.
Scores of models and sizes of all kinds illustrated. Save two-
thirds the boat builder's price. Get our offer.

BROOKS MFG. CO., 5002 Sidney St., Saginaw, Mich.

Patronized by Those Who Want The Best.

Luxuriously Appointed
Superbly Horsed

Special Accommodations
for Ladies and Children.

Glass Lounging and
Smoking Rooms, Di-
rectly on the "Arena."

Tea is served at "Music
Rides" Afternoons four
to six.



Riding Academy

66th St. and Central Park West, New York.

Wm. Durland, President.
Humphry D. Bond, Treasurer.

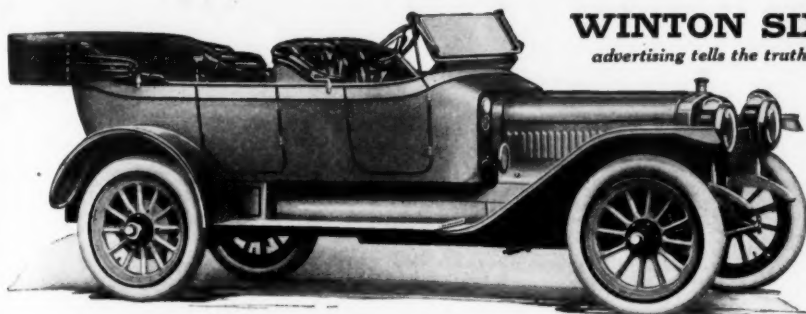
A School of Refinement, Ex- clusive and Most Thorough.

Scientifically Instructed
Perfectly Equipped

Concert Receptions
Afternoons and Evenings.

The largest, most sunny
and delightfully attrac-
tive Dressing Rooms
and "Arena" in the
world. Perfect Valet
and Maid Service.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



WINTON SIX

advertising tells the truth

Leading the Procession *vs.* Trying to Keep up With It

Most makers produce new models every year—in an effort to keep up with the procession.

Not so with the Winton Company. The Winton Six was so far in the lead when it was first produced (June, 1907) that it is now in its sixth successful year without having required a single radical change.

And no wonder. For the Winton Six was the world's first self-cranking car. It was the first six in the world ever produced in a factory devoted *exclusively* to six-cylinder cars. And it is the only car in the world (of any type) whose repair expense cost is known. Sworn reports of individual owners, covering more than a million miles of travel, give the Winton Six a record of 29.2 cents repair expense per 1000 miles.

The Winton Six is a car you can safely trust. It has no experimental features. It is the best proved six in the world. And, because we have no watered stock and no outstanding bonds or mortgages, we can sell you this leader of sixes at a price that competition cannot touch—\$3000.

You will like the Winton Six at first sight, and the better you know it, the more you will commend it.

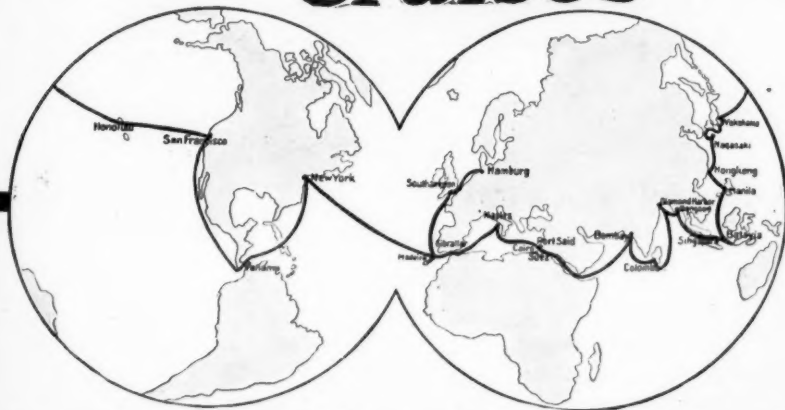
Shall we send our latest catalog?

The Winton Motor Car Co.

122 Berea Road, Cleveland, O.

Winton Company Branch Houses in New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Kansas City, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle.

Hamburg-American Line Cruises



Around the World, Through the Panama Canal
125-Day Cruise. From New York, Jan. 27, 1914

By the **S. S. CLEVELAND** 17,000 Tons

Write for full information

Summer Cruises

**To the Land of the
Midnight Sun, Iceland,
Spitzbergen, North
Cape, Norway, Scotland,
Orkney and Faroe
Islands**

From Hamburg during

June, July and August

by S. S. Victoria Luise,
Bismarck, Meteor

Write for beautifully illustrated books, stating cruise

Hamburg-American Line

41-45 Broadway New York
Boston Philadelphia Pittsburgh Chicago
St. Louis San Francisco

The Panama Canal and West Indies

**See the Canal before
its completion!**

LAST TWO CRUISES

March 29 by S.S. Moltke

April 10 by

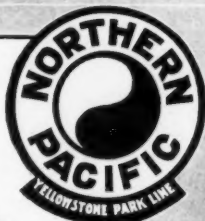
S.S. Victoria Luise

Duration of each cruise
16 Days \$145 and up

Also weekly sailings by "Prinz" steamers of our Atlas Service



YELLOWSTONE FOR YOURS!



A dear old lady of sixty-five was making her fifth trip through the Park last summer. Four times had she surrendered to the call of that phenomenal region. Her visits there have a marked effect upon her health and spirits---she grows young again! Many people have gone back to enjoy anew the climate, scenery, wonders and pastimes of

America's Only Geyserland

1913 Season: June 15 to September 15

Nowhere in all the world will you find such a region of wonders and of educational, inspirational and healthful uplift.

Of course you will want to go via Northern Pacific---only line to original and northern entrance: Gardiner Gateway, and thus via Mammoth Hot Springs.

Let me send you our illustrated literature---from it you will get some inkling of the cause of Grandma's infatuation. Write today and make a visit to the Geyserland of fancy. Then you will surely want to visit the Geyserland of fact next summer.

• Northern Pacific Ry •

A. M. CLELAND, General Passenger Agent, ST. PAUL

Panama-Pacific-International Exposition, San Francisco, 1915

*Vista from Mt. Washburn Road—
The Fine Clad Summits and
Beautiful Hayden Valley, Yellowstone Park*



Copyright by Gifted for Northern Pacific Ry.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

One Year Guarantee Certificate!

MERIT Fountain PEN

14-kt. gold pen point, tipped with the Hardest Russian Iridium, the most expensive metal known.

Will not Blot, Scratch or Skip.

Holders made of pure rubber, fitted with Automatic Back Flow Feeds, insuring against leakage.

Special Guarantee Certificate

with each pen. It signifies merit, dependability and perfect construction.

Money refunded if not satisfied.

Price, \$1.00 Each

SENT POSTPAID

ADDRESS:

THE COTTIER CO.

Second National Bank Building

Fifth Ave. at Twenty-eighth St.
New York City, N. Y.

Ladies' pen of Pararubber, hand turned with 14-kt. gold filled bands. Fitted with a 14-kt. solid gold nib with Iridium tip.

Made of finest quality Pararubber, beautifully chased and highly polished. Fitted with a large 14-kt. solid gold nib with Iridium tip.

"G. B. S."

The May AINSLEE'S, published April 15th, contains, in addition to many brilliant fiction features, the latest shower of sparks from the pen of

BERNARD SHAW

He has labeled it "Causerie on Handel in England," but he incidentally pays his respects to many things. At all stands. 15 cents.

AINSLEE'S



YOU CAN MAKE CIGARETTES LIKE THESE
A Practical Novelty for Cigarette Smokers

TURKO CIGARETTE ROLLER

Sent postpaid for **25cts.** Address,
Turko Roller Co., P. O. Box 1263, New York

YOUR NEWS DEALER

maintains his store at considerable expense. He must pay for help, rent and lighting. He carries many articles that you would never dream of ordering direct from manufacturers, and is, therefore, of great service when you need a newspaper, a cigar, or a box of stationery. Then why not give him all of your custom and so help make his business profitable?

Tell him to show you samples of AINSLEE'S, POPULAR, SMITH'S, PEOPLE'S, NEW STORY and TOP-NOTCH magazines. Select those you want and he will gladly deliver them to your residence regularly.

Then, when you want something good to read, you will not have to search for it.

STREET & SMITH, Publishers, New York

If it isn't an Eastman, It isn't a Kodak.



It's Springtime. Every field and park
and woodland—every walk and ride, every
joyous outing, invites your KODAK.

EASTMAN KODAK CO.,

ROCHESTER, N. Y. *The Kodak City.*

Catalogue free at your dealers or by mail.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Corn Chicanery

Trying to Cheat One's Feet



(304)

Thousands of people pare their corns—merely take off the top layer.

Thousands of others use liquids and plasters, just for brief effect.

Yet every corn can be removed in two days. Every corn pain can be instantly ended.

Anyone can do this in a scientific way. It is being done on a million corns a month.

The entire corn comes out, root, callous, everything. And without any pain or soreness. You simply apply a Blue-jay plaster and then forget the corn.

You are cheating yourself when you use makeshifts in these modern days. The use of Blue-jay ends the corn.

A in the picture is the soft B & B wax. It loosens the corn.
B stops the pain and keeps the wax from spreading.
C wraps around the toe. It is narrowed to be comfortable.
D is rubber adhesive to fasten the plaster on.

Blue-jay Corn Plasters

Sold by Druggists—15c and 25c per package

Sample Mailed Free. Also Blue-jay Bunion Plasters.

Bauer & Black, Chicago and New York, Makers of Surgical Dressings, etc.

THE **Keeley**
Cure

For Liquor and Drug Users

A scientific treatment which has cured half a million in the past thirty-three years, and the one treatment which has stood the severe test of time. Administered by medical experts, at the Keeley Institutes only. For full particulars write

To the Following Keeley Institutes:

Hot Springs, Ark.
Atlanta, Ga.
Dwight, Ill.
Marion, Ind.
Des Moines, Ia.
Crab Orchard, Ky.

Portland, Me.
Omaha, Neb.
Manchester, N. H.
Buffalo, N. Y.
Greensboro, N. C.
Columbus, Ohio.

Oklahoma City, Okla., 918 N. Stiles St.
Philadelphia, Pa., 812 N. Broad St.
Pittsburgh, Pa., 4246 Fifth Ave.
Dallas, Texas.
Salt Lake City, Utah.
Seattle, Wash.

Waukesha, Wis.
Winnepeg, Manitoba.
Guatemala City, Guatemala.
Puebla, Mexico.
London, England.



WHITE VALLEY GEMS IMPORTED from FRANCE
SEE THEM BEFORE PAYING!

These gems are chemical white sapphires—LOOK like Diamonds. Stand acid and fire diamond tests. So hard they easily scratch a file and will cut glass. Brilliance guaranteed 25 years. All mounted in 14K solid gold diamond settings. Will send you any style ring, pin or stud for examination—all charges prepaid—no money in advance. Write today for free illustrated booklet, special prices and price-advances. **WHITE VALLEY GEM CO., 700 Saks Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind.**

AINSLIE'S MAGAZINE

is printed with inks manufactured by
W. D. WILSON PRINTING INK CO., LTD.,

17 SPRUCE STREET, NEW YORK CITY

CRESCA FOREIGN DELICACIES

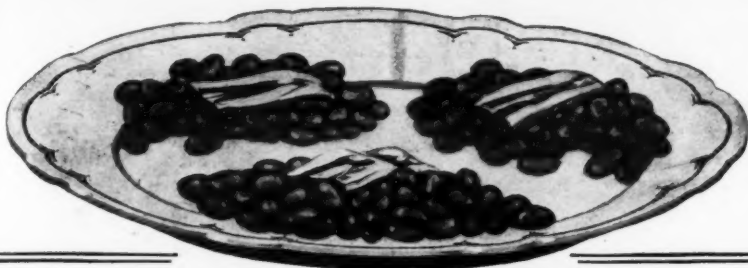
Rich, Unusual Tasty Things from Many Lands.



For a two-cent stamp we will send our palatable color booklet giving full particulars as well as many suggestions for menus and a host of distinctive, rare recipes. Address **CRESCA COMPANY, Importers, 361 Greenwich St., N.Y.**



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



Serve on One Plate Three Kinds of Baked Beans

Choose the three which you think are best.
Then let your folks choose the superlative kind. See if they
pick Van Camp's.

We May Be Wrong

Perhaps somebody somewhere has equalled this dish, and we haven't found it out.

But we have made this test with twenty kinds of baked beans. And everyone always picks out the Van Camp's.

We are pretty sure that your folks won't differ from the rest.

Here is a dish prepared by a chef from the Hotel Ritz in Paris.

We pick out for it just the white, plump beans.

We make the sauce from vine-ripened tomatoes, and bake it with the beans.

We use for the baking a modern type of steam oven. Thus the beans are well baked without crisping.

They are baked for hours at 245 degrees. Yet the beans are baked without bursting.

So the beans come out nut-like,

mealy and whole. They are easy to digest.

And we bring them to you with the fresh oven flavor, by our process of sterilization.

Van Camp's
BAKED
WITH TOMATO
SAUCE
PORK AND BEANS

"The National Dish"

Judge for yourself if this effort is wasted.

Learn by a test if common beans please folks like Van Camp's. Then tell your grocer in the future to send the kind you like best.

Three sizes: 10, 15 and 20 cents per can.

Baked by

Van Camp Packing Company, (Established 1861) Indianapolis, Ind

(241)

LITTLE MOTHERS



Use CUTICURA SOAP

And Cuticura Ointment. They afford the purest, sweetest and most economical method of preserving, purifying and beautifying the skin, scalp and hair. For torturing eczemas, rashes, itchings, inflammations and chaffings of infants, children and adults Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment are most effective.

Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment are sold throughout the world. Send post-card to nearest depot for free sample of each with 32-page book: Newbery, 27, Charterhouse sq., London; R. Towns & Co., Sydney, N. S. W.; Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town; Muller, McLean & Co., Calcutta and Bombay; Potter Drug and Chem. Corp., Boston, U. S. A.

Men who shave and shampoo with Cuticura Soap will find it best for skin and scalp.

A Surprise For Thin Women



Thousands of thin women have been getting wonderful results from a treatment which is 15 years old and gaining in popularity every day. It has not cost them a penny to try it, nor will it you.

You will be surprised and delighted at the change in your appearance when the treatment has produced its effect. It has been astonishing how little additional flesh and bust development it has required to make many of our thin patrons attractive—even fascinating. They tell us they seem to be attracting a flattering attention which they enjoyed and had ceased to expect.

Just write today saying, "Send me your free treatment." We will immediately send, in plain wrapper, sufficient Dr. Whitney's Nerve & Flesh Builder to give you the additional flesh that will add so much to your attractiveness. In some cases the trial alone has been all that was needed.

No. 1 is the general flesh builder. No. 5 is for giving development to the bust alone without enlarging other parts of the body. Say which one you prefer.

Let us prove that we can give you a full, round bust, and a superb figure. Send in the coupon below before this offer is withdrawn, and get your free trial in plain wrapper by return mail.

FREE TRIAL COUPON

Cut this out now. This coupon entitles the sender to one full trial treatment of Dr. Whitney's Nerve & Flesh Builder, provided it is the first trial sender has received. C. L. Jones Co., 129 D Friend Bldg., Elmira, N. Y.



RANGER BICYCLES

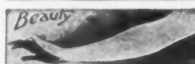
Have imported roller chains, sprockets and pedals; New Departure Coasters-Brakes and Hubs; Puncture Proof Tires; highest grade equipment and many advanced features possessed by no other wheels. Guaranteed 2 yrs.

FACTORY PRICES direct to you are less than others ask for cheap wheels. Other reliable models from \$19 up. A few good second-hand machines \$5 to \$8.

10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL We ship on approval, freight prepaid, anywhere in U.S., without a cent in advance. **DO NOT BUY** a bicycle or a pair of tires from anyone at any price until you get our big new catalog and special prices and a marvelous new offer. A postal brings everything. Write to now. **TRIAL, Coaster-Brake**

Rear Wheels, lamps, parts, sundries, half usual prices. **Rider Agents everywhere** are coining money selling our bicycles, tires and sundries. Write today.

MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. T-110 CHICAGO



"I can take a pound a day off a patient, or put it on. Other systems may temporarily alleviate, but this is sure and permanent."—N. Y.

San, Aug., 1901. Send for lecture: "Great Subject of Fat."

No Dieting. No Hard Work.

DR. JOHN WILSON GIBBS' TREATMENT FOR THE PERMANENT REDUCTION OF OBESITY.

Harmless and Positive. **No Failure.** Your reduction is assured—reduce to stay. One month's treatment **\$6.00.** Mail or office. **1870 Broadway, New York. A PERMANENT REDUCTION GUARANTEED.**

"In positive and permanent."—N. Y. Herald, July 9, 1903.

"The Obesity, Dr. Gibbs is the recognized authority."—N. Y. World, July 7, 1903.



Beautiful Hair And Lots of It

Crystolis "Grows Hair in 30 Days."

TRY IT AT OUR RISK.

MAIL COUPON TODAY

Here's good news at last for men and women whose hair is falling, who are growing bald and gray, whose scalps are covered with dandruff that nothing seems to keep away and whose heads itch like mad.

Good news even for those who imagine themselves hopelessly and incurably bald or who suffer from hair or scalp trouble of any kind.

We have secured the sole American rights for the great English discovery, Crystolis, the new hair remedy that in Europe has been awarded Gold Medals at the big Paris and Brussels Expositions.

Already, since securing the American rights hundreds of men and women have written us to tell of phenomenal results obtained by its use. People who have been bald for years tell how they now glory in their beautiful hair. Others who have had dandruff all their lives say they have now a clean, healthy scalp and that hair stopped falling after a few applications of this wonderful new treatment. Mr. H. P. Baehr reports that Crystolis grew hair on his head in less than thirty days.

Rev. Campbell, N. Y., writes:

"It seems incredible, after using so many things for my hair, but am delighted to say Crystolis has stopped the itching and a fine growth of new hair has appeared."

Mr. Morse, Boston, Mass., states:—

"I lost my hair 18 years ago. After using Crystolis

tells my head was covered with a thick growth of hair of natural color. No more itching, no more falling hair, no more dandruff."

Dr. J. Hill, Indiana, writes:—"Your remedy has grown hair on my head which was shiny and bald for 40 years."

Miss Harris, Kansas, writes:—"After several applications of Crystolis my head stopped itching, the dandruff disappeared, my hair stopped falling and new hair came in all over my head."

We don't care whether you are bothered with falling hair, prematurely gray hair, matted hair or stringy hair; dandruff, itching scalp, or any or all forms of hair trouble, we want you to try "CRYSTOLIS," at our risk.

Cut out the coupon below and mail it today to Creslo Laboratories, 400 S. St., Binghamton, N. Y.

FREE COUPON.

The Creslo Laboratories,
400 S. St., Binghamton, N. Y.

"Send me full proof and particulars of how Crystolis stops falling hair, banishes dandruff and itching scalp, and promotes new growth of hair of natural color without staining or dyeing. This information to be sent free of cost to me."

Write your name and address plainly and
PIN THIS COUPON TO YOUR LETTER.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

DIAMONDS-WATCHES ON CREDIT

Holiday Presents—Send for Catalog

This Diamond Ring, enlarged to show the handsome mounting, is our great special. Finest quality pure white Diamonds, perfect in cut and full of fiery brilliancy. Specially selected by our diamond experts, and skillfully mounted in our famous Loftis "Perfection" 6-prong ring mounting, 14k. Solid Gold. Cased in dark blue velvet ring box. The four rings here shown are the most popular, although we show all sizes and styles in our large Catalog.

540	\$25
641	\$50
642	\$75
643	\$100

The Best Gift of All

Send for this Free Holiday Catalog, telling all about our Easy Credit Plan. Over 2000 illustrations of Diamonds, Watches, Jewelry, etc., at bargain prices for Holiday presents! Select anything desired, have it sent to your home or express office, all charges prepaid. If entirely satisfactory, send us one-fifth of the purchase price and keep it, balance in eight equal monthly amounts. We give better values and easier terms than any house in America. Write for Holiday Catalog today. Don't delay.

Loftis Bros. & Co., Diamond Merchants,
DEPT., M 843 100 to 108 N. State St., CHICAGO, ILL.
Branch Stores: Pittsburgh, Pa., and St. Louis, Mo.



Brown Your Hair WITH WALNUT TINT HAIR STAIN

Light Spots, Gray or Streaked Hair Quickly Stained to a Beautiful Brown or Black.

Trial Bottle Sent Upon Request.



Nothing gives a woman the appearance of age more surely than gray, streaked or faded hair. Just a touch now and then with Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain and presto! Youth has returned again.

No one would ever suspect that you stained your hair after you use this splendid preparation. It does not rub off as dyes do, and leaves the hair nice and fluffy, with a beautiful brown color or black if you prefer.

It only takes you a few minutes once a month to apply Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain with your comb. Stains only the hair, is easily and quickly applied, and it is free from lead, sulphur, silver and all metallic compounds. Has no odor, no sediment, no grease. One bottle of Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain should last you a year. Sells for \$1.00 per bottle at first-class druggists. We

guarantee satisfaction. Send your name and address, and enclose 25 cents (stamps or coin) and we will mail you, charges prepaid, a trial package, in plain, sealed wrapper, with valuable booklet on hair. Mrs. Potter's Hygienic Supply Co., 1854 Groton Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

Flash Like Genuine BARODA DIAMONDS.

at 1/40 the cost—IN SOLID GOLD RINGS

Stand acid test and expert examination. We guarantee them. See them first—then pay.

Special Offer—14k Tiffany ring 1 ct. \$5.98. Gentle ring 1 ct. \$6.98. 14k Stud 1 ct. \$1.98. Sent C.O.D. for inspection. Catalog FREE, shows full line. Patent ring yours included. Jewels, Baroda Co., Dept. 77, Leland & Dover St., Chicago

BUY YOUR FURNACE \$10 DOWN \$10 A MONTH



Our monthly payment plan of selling direct saves you the dealer's profits and excessive charges for installation. The

JAHANT FURNACE

with the patent-d "Down Draft System" is best for residences, schools, hotels, churches, etc., because it delivers plenty of heat whenever and whenever desired at a saving of 1/3 to 1/2 in fuel bills. Install the Jahant yourself. We send complete outfit, freight prepaid, with special plans, detailed instructions and all necessary tools for installation. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.

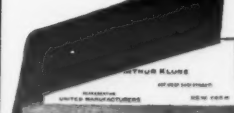
Write for free illustrated book
THE JAHANT HEATING CO.,
153 Mill Street Akron, Ohio

Save 1/3 to 1/2 on Fuel Bills

Your Business Representative

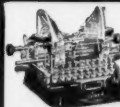
must bear the cold, critical scrutiny of a busy man. If a PEERLESS PATENT BOOK FORM CARD has been sent in as your representative, you have submitted to his attention a card that will command his admiration, compel his acknowledgment that a man of quality sells for an audience, and create an impression that the man who sent in that card is worth seeing and his business worth hearing.

Peerless Patent Book Form Card



stands out as the most great and important of the century. The marvel of it is that when the cards are detached all edges are absolutely smooth. Your cards are always together, always clean, unmarred, perfectly flat, and elegant. You cannot appreciate their uniqueness without actually seeing them. Send for a sample book today and detach one for one.

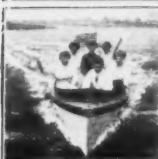
THE JOHN B. WIGGINS COMPANY
Engravers Die Embossers Plate Printers
66-68 East Adams Street, Chicago



Rent a Few Months—Then It's Yours!

This Great Visible Writer The Famous Oliver Model No. 3

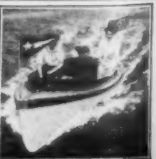
Send your name and we will tell you about the greatest typewriter proposition in the world. Typewriters Distributing Syndicate, 166 D, 75 N. Michigan Blvd., Chicago



MULLINS STEEL BOATS CAN'T SINK

Built like Government Torpedo Boats, of tough, puncture-proof, galvanized steel plates, so securely joined together that a leak is impossible. The Mullins Steel Boats are guaranteed against puncture, leakage, waterlogging, warping, drying out, opening seams, etc. MOTORS: The Low-Victor 4-Cycle and Ford 2-Cycle. Light, powerful, simple, can be operated by the beginner, and is automobile engine. One man control, never stall at any speed, exhaust silently under water. Beautiful illustrated book, free. THE W. H. MULLINS CO., World's Largest Boat Builders, 335 Franklin St., Salem, Ohio

STEEL ROW BOATS AND CEDAR CANOES



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Velvet Grip

RUBBER BUTTON

HOSE SUPPORTER

Gives
Perfect
Freedom

Buy by name

Velvet Grip

Gives the
utmost wear
value.

Always neat,
strong and secure.

Our exclusive rubber but-
ton saves stockings.

EVERY PAIR GUARANTEED
SOLD EVERYWHERE

GEORGE FROST CO.
MAKERS, BOSTON

Also makers of the famous Boston
Garter for men.



Children's
sample pair
16c. postpaid
(give age).

\$92⁵⁰—Our Price for Next 30 Days

We now offer the Edwards "Steelcote" Garage
(1913 Model), direct-from-factory, for \$92.50.
But to protect ourselves from advancing prices of steel, we set a
time limit upon the offer. We guarantee this record price for 30
days only. Just now we can save you \$35 or more.

Edwards Fireproof Steel Garage

Quickly Set Up Any Place

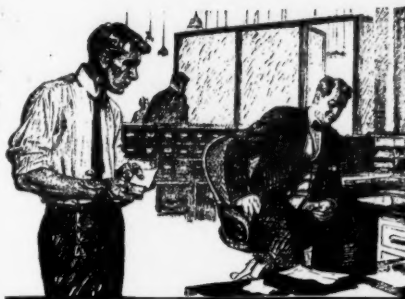
An artistic, fireproof steel structure for private use. Gives
absolute protection from sneak thieves, joy riders, fire,
lightning, accidents, carelessness, etc. Saves \$20 to \$30
monthly in garage rent. Saves time, work, worry and trouble.
Comes ready to set up. All parts cut and fitted. Simple, com-
plete directions furnished. Absolutely rust-proof. Joints and
seams permanently tight. Practically indestructible. Locks se-
curely. Ample room for largest car and all equipment. Made
by one of the largest makers of portable fireproof buildings.
Prompt, safe delivery and satisfaction guaranteed. Postal sent

(101)



today brings new
56-page illustrated
Garage Book by re-
turn mail. Address
**The Edwards
Mfg. Co.**

601-651
Eggleston
Avenue,
Cincinnati,
Ohio



You Can Qualify for the Boss's Salary

It makes you envious when you catch a
glimpse of the pay envelope some other fellow
gets. *You wish you were getting what he gets.*

He once earned no more than you do. *You*
can earn what *he* now earns. It's all a matter of
knowing as much about the work as *he* knows.
You can acquire that very knowledge in spare
time through the help of the International
Correspondence Schools which have been raising
salaries for over 21 years.

Can you read and write? Then the way is
open. The I. C. S. doesn't care where you live,
how little schooling you have had, or what little
spare time you have. *The I. C. S. will go to*
you and train you in your own home.

To learn how the I. C. S. can help you costs
you nothing. Mark the coupon opposite your
chosen occupation and mail it to the I. C. S.
They will send you the facts.

Don't begrudge the other fellow *his* pay.
Get out *yourself* for a better position and more
salary. Mark and mail the coupon *NOW*.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Box 1199 SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without further obligation on my part, how
I can qualify for the position before which I mark X.

<input type="checkbox"/> Salesmanship	<input type="checkbox"/> Civil Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeping
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec. Lighting Supt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Stenography & Typewriting
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Expert	<input type="checkbox"/> Window Trimming
<input type="checkbox"/> Artistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Show Card Writing
<input type="checkbox"/> Building Contractor	<input type="checkbox"/> Lettering and Sign Painting
<input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman	<input type="checkbox"/> Advertising
<input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Illustrating
<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Designing
<input type="checkbox"/> Mechan. Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law
<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman	<input type="checkbox"/> Automobile Running
<input type="checkbox"/> Civil Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/> English Branches
<input type="checkbox"/> Mine Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/> Poultry Farming
<input type="checkbox"/> Stationary Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing & Steam Fitting	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engines	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish
	<input type="checkbox"/> French
	<input type="checkbox"/> German

Name

Present Occupation

Street and No.

City State



**No Woman
Will Remain Beautiful
if she permits her hair to become faded or streaked with
gray. This loss of attractiveness can so easily be avoided.**

**"BROWNATONE"
HAIR STAIN**

Is the One Stain that Anyone can use with absolute safety to
the hair and scalp, with entirely good results, without pre-
vious experience, and with the beautiful brown (or black if
you prefer) will not rub or wash off, and can not be detected.
For superior to "dye" and contains none of their objection-
able ingredients.

Prepared in Two Shades: Golden or Medium Brown; Dark
Brown or Black. Trial bottles sold direct upon receipt of price.
by sending stamps, or mailed direct upon receipt of price.

I enclose (the stamps or
coin) for a trial size of "Brown-
atone" and your booklet on the
care of hair.

State shade desired.....



Name.....

address.....

Town.....State.....

The
Kenton
Pharmaceutical Co.
313 E. Pike St.,
Covington Ky.

Tell Me Your Foot Troubles

It will ease your Mind;
I will ease your Feet.

**Enlarged Joints Reduced and
Toes Straightened by
ACHFELDT'S (Patented)
"Perfection" TOE SPRING**

Worn at night without inconven-
ience, with auxiliary appliances
for day use. Sent on approval.
Money refunded if not as represented.

Use My Improved Instep Arch Supporter for "Flat Foot"
and broken-down instep. Send outline of foot. Full
particulars and advice free in plain sealed envelope.

M. ACHFELDT, Foot Specialist
Room 18, 163 West 23d Street, NEW YORK

PREVENTS OBESITY.

THE BEST

"APENTA"

NATURAL APERIENT WATER

BOTTLED AT THE SPRINGS, BUDA PEST, HUNGARY.

Asthma and Hay Fever

relieved by **HIMALYA**. Send
for **Free Trial Bottle** of Hi-
malya, the valuable remedy
for Hay Fever and Asthma.
We have hundreds of reliable
testimonials showing positive
and permanent cures to
persons who have suf-
fered for years after
other remedies and
change of climate had
failed.

Write today to
the
HIMALYA CO.

295 Howard St.,
Detroit, Mich.

I Trust You 10 Days. Send No Money



82 Hair Switch on Approval. Choice natural wavy or
straight hair. Send lock of hair and I will mail a 25-inch, short
fine human hair switch to match. A big bargain. Remit \$2 in ten days
or sell 3 and GET YOUR SWITCH FREE. Extra shades a little more.
Exclude 50 postage. Write today for free beauty book of latest style
hair dressing, high grade switches, pads, wigs, penicillons, and
special bargains in Dutch Fashions. **WOMEN AGENTS WANTED**
ANNA AYERS, Dept. B 93 22 Quincy St., Chicago



**Prof. I. HUBERT'S
MALVINA
CREAM**

**"The One Reliable
Beautifier"**

Positively cures Freckles,
Sunburn, Pimples, Itch-
worm and all imperfections
of the skin and prevents
wrinkles. Does not merely
cover up but eradicates them.
**Malvina Lotion and Ichthyol
Soap** should be used in con-
nection with **Malvina Cream**. At all
drug stores, or sent post paid on
receipt of price. Cream, 50c,
Lotion, 50c., Soap, 25c.
Prof. I. HUBERT, Toledo, Ohio

Don't Wear a Truss

TRUSS WEARERS, Here's Great, Good, News.

Tiresome, Torturous Trusses Can Be Thrown
Away FOREVER, And It's All Because

STUART'S PLAPAO-PADS are different from the
painful truss, being medicine applicators made self-
adhesive purposely to prevent slipping and to afford
an arrangement to hold the parts securely in place.

NO STRAPS, BUCKLES OR SPRINGS—cannot slip,
so cannot chafe or compress against the pubic bone.
Thousands have treated themselves in the privacy of
the home and conquered the most obstinate cases—no
delay from work. Soft as velvet—easy to apply—in-
expensive. When weakened muscles recover there is no further use
for truss.

Awarded Gold Medal International Exposition, Rome
Write TODAY and Grand Prix at Paris.

let us prove what we say by sending **TRIAL PLAPAO FREE**
PLAPAO LABORATORIES, Block 216, St. Louis, Mo.

Give them Vinol



**THE DELICIOUS COD LIVER AND
IRON TONIC WITHOUT OIL**

ELDERLY PEOPLE AND DELICATE CHILDREN

benefit greatly by the strengthening and body-building virtues of Vinol which contains in concentrated form all the medicinal elements of the finest Norwegian cod liver oil with peptonate of iron added—Deliciously palatable and easily digested—contains no oil—agrees with everybody—children love it. Its superiority as a tonic reconstructor in all weak, run-down conditions and for chronic coughs, colds, and bronchitis is attested by those who know its value.

For sale by one druggist in a place. Look for the Vinol agency where you live or address its proprietors, Chester Kent & Co., Boston, Mass. Trial sample sent free on receipt of 2-cent stamp.

Right Here is Your Chance to Buy That Typewriter



The Fox Typewriter is a beautifully finished, high grade, Visible writer, with a light touch and easy action and extreme durability. It has a tabulator, back spacer, two-color ribbon, stencil cutter, card holder, interchangeable platens and carriages, is fully automatic, and is sent out complete with fine metal cover and hardwood base.

If our typewriter does not suit you after a ten days' free trial of it send it back at our expense. If you wish to buy it after trial you can pay us a little down and the balance monthly or in all cash, just as you prefer. There is no "red tape" tied to this offer, and it is open to any responsible person in the United States.

Local Agents Wanted—Samples at Wholesale

We are making a special offer on a few Fox Visible Typewriters that have been very slightly used for demonstration purposes. These are not second-hand nor rebuilt, and could scarcely be told from new by anyone. Low price—easy payment terms—ten days' trial. Write for full particulars and don't forget that **right here is your chance to buy that typewriter.**

FOX TYPEWRITER COMPANY
4503-4513 Front Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich.

AINSLIE'S MAGAZINE ENQUIRY COUPON

Name Address

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Crooked Spines Made Straight



**Use the Sheldon Method
30 Days at Our Risk.**

YOU need not venture the loss of a penny. No matter how serious your case, no matter what else you have tried, the Sheldon Method will help you and probably wholly overcome your affliction. We are so sure of this that we will make a Sheldon Appliance to suit your special condition and let you decide, after 30 days, whether you are satisfied. We make this unusual offer simply because the 15,000 cases we have treated absolutely prove the wonderful benefit the Sheldon Method brings to spinal sufferers, young and old.

There is no need to suffer longer or to bear the torture of old-fashioned plaster, leather or steel jackets. The Sheldon Appliance gives an even, perfect and adjustable support to the weakened or deformed spine and brings almost immediate relief even in the most serious cases. It is as easy to put on or take off as a coat, does not chafe or irritate, is light and cool. The price is within reach of all who suffer. You owe it to yourself, or the afflicted one in your family, to find out more about it. Send for our book free at once.

PHILO BURT MFG. CO., 305 4th Street, Jamestown, N.Y.

Dainty Gift Box for YOU



PURSE SIZE BOX POWDER AND MIRROR

Send for the cost of package and postage. Here's the daintiest, most useful gift you ever saw. In order to have you give acquainted and know how surprisingly delightful it is, we will give you 2 weeks supply of

CARMEN
Complexion
POWDER

Put up in a dainty, refillable, Purse size box, with it a neat Vanity Mirror. Send your name, address and one dime, or five in stamps, and both **CARMEN** Powder and Vanity Mirror will be sent to you, prepaid. Write Today—Mentioning Shaded White, Pink, Cream, Blue.

Stallford-Miller Co., 545 Olive St., St. Louis, Mo.

PRACTICAL ART PAYS BIG

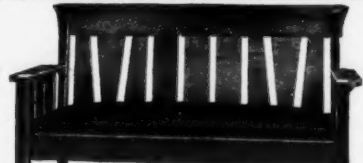
After 23 years of continuous success as a resident school, The Thomas School of Art, established in 1880, announces now a new department—PERSONAL, INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION BY MAIL.



**Newspaper Sketching
Magazine Illustrating
Fashion Drawing
Commercial Illustrating**
Encaustic and Caricature

Many Trained Students of this School are earning, as artists, \$30 to \$100 per week. Positions waiting for many more. Write Dept. L for circulars that will tell you all.

THE THOMAS SCHOOL OF ART
No. 161 West 23rd Street, New York



Dealer's Price, \$25.00
Our Price, \$14.50

for this MASTER-BUILT settee No. 12—solid quarter-sawn oak—Marokene leather cushion—67 in. long, 37 1/2 in. high, 21 in. deep. Strong, handsome, guaranteed. Finished as you wish. Shipped in complete sections. Easily assembled.

WRITE FOR FURNITURE BOOK—FREE
—showing furniture for every room. Factory prices save you 1/2 dealer's prices. Mail postal today for book.
BROOKS MFG. CO., 404 Sidney St., Saginaw, Mich.

PRICE
\$7.50
UP

Make \$20 a Day



with our wonderful **Champion Picture Machine**. Takes, develops, finishes photo in half minute; 300 an hour. No dark room, Experience unnecessary. Photo Post Cards and Buttons are all the rage! You coin money anywhere. Small investment; big profits. Be poor no more. Write for Free Booklet and more etc.

AMERICAN MINUTE PHOTO CO.
2214 Ogden Ave., Dept. E189 Chicago, Ill.



Best grade cedar canoe for \$20
Detroit canoes can't sink

All canoes cedar and copper fastened. We make all sizes and styles, also power canoes. Write for free catalog, giving prices with retailer's profit cut out. We are the largest manufacturers of canoes in the world.
DETROIT BOAT CO., 172 Bellevue Ave., Detroit, Mich.

UNCLE SAM IS BEST EMPLOYER ;

pay is high and sure; hours short; places permanent; promotions regular; vacations with pay; thousands of vacancies every month; all kinds of pleasant work everywhere; no layoffs; no full needed; common education sufficient. Special money back guarantee if you write today for booklet D-1066. IT IS FREE.

EARL HOPKINS, - - WASHINGTON, D. C.

GET A
BETTER
PLACE



ARMY AUCTION BARGAINS

Saddles	\$8.00 up	New Uniforms	\$1.50 up
Rifles	.50 "	Army Revolvers	1.65 "
Team Harness	\$1.25 "	Rifle Bibles	1.45 "
Leggins, Pair	.15 "	Swords	.35 "
Tents	2.50 "	7 Shot Cartridges	2.95 "
Colts Cal. .45, Revolvers	\$7.50 up	Cartridges .015 each	
Springfield Rouser Sporting Rifle	11.45	Cartridges .015 each	
Army Brock Loading Rifle	84 cents	Cartridges .015 each	

MARCH 1913 CATALOGUE, 400 large pages, over 5,000 illustrations. 15 acres Govt. Auction Bargains described in cyclopedia catalogue, mailed 25c stamps.
FRANCIS BANNERMAN, 501 Broadway, New York

:: POCKET EDITIONS ::

USEFUL SUBJECTS 10c. EACH.

Sheldon's Letter Writer; Shirley's Lover's Guide; Woman's Secrets, or How to Be Beautiful; Guide to Etiquette; Physical Health Culture; Frank Merriwell's Book of Physical Development; National Dream Book; Zingara Fortune Teller; The Art of Boxing and Self-defense; The Key to Hypnotism; U. S. Army Physical Exercises.
Street & Smith, Publishers, 79-89 Seventh Ave., New York

Tobacco Habit Banished

In 48 to 72 Hours Yes, positively permanently banished almost before you know it. Pains not, easy to take. Results quick, sure, lasting. No craving for tobacco in any form after first dose. Not a substitute. Harmless, no poisonous habit forming drugs. Satisfactory results guaranteed in every case or money refunded. **Tobacco Reducer** is the only absolutely scientific and thoroughly dependable tobacco remedy ever discovered. Write for free booklet and positive proof.

Newell Pharmacal Co. Dept. 40. St. Louis, Mo.

Habit or Efficiency?

One of the time-honored customs of many households is the sweeping of carpets and rugs with a primitive corn broom. That this is an absolute waste of energy, a ruthless destroyer of floor coverings and a preventable source of damaging clouds of dust, is vouched for by over twelve million satisfied women who are now using the BISSELL Sweeper.

BISSELL'S

"Cyclo" BALL-BEARING Carpet Sweeper

Is the most efficient and highly improved carpet sweeper on the market. It brightens and preserves carpets and rugs, and will last for ten years or more, outwearing at least forty corn brooms that would cost from twelve to twenty dollars. Sold by the best dealers everywhere at \$2.75 to \$5.75.

Don't continue to sweep in the old, laborious way when at such a small cost you can make sweeping day a pleasant anticipation instead of a day to be dreaded.

Write for booklet, "Easy, Economical, Sanitary Sweeping."

Bissell Carpet Sweeper Co.
Dept. 56 Grand Rapids, Mich.
(Largest Exclusive Carpet Sweeper Manufacturers in the World.) (M)



RIDER AGENTS WANTED

In each town to ride and exhibit sample 1913 model. Write for Special Offer. Finest Guaranteed 1913 Models \$10 to \$27 with Coaster-Brakes and Puncture-Proof Tires. 1911 and 1912 MODELS \$7 to \$12 ALL OF BEST MAKES.

100 Second-Hand Wheels

All makes and models, good as new. Great Factory Clearing Sale. \$3 to \$8

We Ship on Approval without a cent deposit, pay the freight & allow 10 Days' Free Trial

TIRES counter-brake wheels, lamps, and sundries, half usual prices, DO NOT BUY till you get our catalogue and offer. Write now. MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. T-110 CHICAGO

Improve Your Complexion, Your Figure and Your Health



Thousands of beautiful women thank Dr. James P. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Wafers for their clear, beautiful skin, their graceful figure and good health.

If your complexion needs improvement, if you are weak, nervous, thin, tired, or in any respect not at your best, try Dr. Campbell's Wafers today. Used by men and women for twenty-seven years with more than satisfactory results.

Absolutely safe and harmless to anybody. Guaranteed under the Pure Food and Drug Act, June 30th, 1906.

50 CENTS AND \$1.00 PER BOX.

at all good druggists, or sent in plain cover by mail from RICHARD FINK CO., Dept. 55, 415 Broadway, New York City



The Joys of Motherhood

are increased ten-fold when both mother and babe enjoy perfect health. Called upon to bear a double burden, the expectant mother must have additional nourishment not supplied by ordinary foods.

Pabst Extract

The Best Tonic

prepares the way for happy, healthy motherhood. It is both a tonic and a food—highly concentrated and pleasant to the taste. Soothes the nerves, strengthens the lacteal glands, invigorates mind and body and insures quiet, peaceful sleep.

Order a Dozen From Your Druggist

Insist Upon It Being "Pabst"

FREE BOOKLET, "Health Darts," tells all uses and benefits of Pabst Extract. Write for it.

PABST EXTRACT CO.
Milwaukee, Wis.



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Is This Man Gifted With Strange Power?

Prominent People Say He Reads Their Lives as an Open Book.

Do You Want to Know About Your Business, Marriage, Changes, Occupation, Friends, Enemies or What to Do to Achieve Success?

TEST READINGS FREE TO ALL AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE READERS WHO WRITE AT ONCE.

Attention of the mystically inclined seems to be centred at present upon the work of Mr. Clay Burton Vance, who, although laying claim to no special gift of supernatural powers, attempts to reveal the lives of people through the slender clues of hand-writing and birth-dates. The undeniable accuracy of his delineations leads one to surmise that heretofore palmists, prophets, astrologers, and seers of divers beliefs have failed to apply the true principles of the science of divination.

Ask to explain the method by which he gives his delineations, Mr. Vance replied: "I have simply resurrected an ancient science and moulded it into a key to human nature."

The following letter is published as evidence of Mr. Vance's ability:

Prof. Dixon, M. A., Director Lanka Observatory, member of the "Société Astronomique de France," member of the "Astronomische Gesellschaft," Germany, writes:

Prof. Clay Burton Vance:
Dear Sir—"I duly received your letter and Complete Life Reading. I am perfectly satisfied with your Reading: it is in nearly all the items as exact as it could possibly be. It seems strange that you should refer to my suffering from throat trouble. I have just had a bad attack and usually have it two or three times per year. I shall certainly recommend you to my friends who desire a Life Reading."

Arrangements have been made to give free test Readings to all readers of AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE, but it is especially requested that those who wish to avail themselves of this generous offer make application at once. If you wish a delineation of your own life, if you wish a true description of your characteristics, talents and opportunities, simply send your full name, the date, month and year of your birth (state whether Mr., Mrs. or Miss), and also copy the following verse in your own handwriting:

"Your power is marvelous,
So people write,
Please read my life—
Are my prospects bright?"

Send your letter to Mr. Clay Burton Vance, Suite 2868, Palais Royal, Paris, France. If you wish you may enclose 10 cents (stamps of your own country) to pay postage, clerical work, etc. Please note that 5 cents postage is required on letters posted to France. Do not enclose coins or silver in your letter.



SEND FOR FREE CATALOG

DIAMONDS AND JEWELRY

ON CREDIT

BRILLIANT JEWELRY CO

704 MARKET ST

SAN FRANCISCO CAL

WE USE
PURE CALIFORNIA GOLD



Ten Days' Free Trial

allowed on every bicycle we sell. We **Ship on Approval** and **trial** to anyone in the U. S. and **prepay the freight**. If you are not satisfied with the bicycle after using it ten days, ship it back and don't pay a cent.

FACTORY PRICES Do not buy a bicycle or a pair of tires from anyone at any price until you receive our latest **Art Catalog** of high grade bicycles and sundries and learn our **secret** of prices and marvelous new special offers.

IT ONLY COSTS a cent to write a postal and **FREE** by return mail. You will get much valuable information. **Do Not Wait; write it NOW!**

TIRES, Coaster-Brake, rear wheels, lamps, parts, repairs and sundries of all kinds at half usual prices.
MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. T-110 CHICAGO

\$739 Buys The Material Needed To Build This House!



House Design No. 6-A

Here is a house that has been built about 400 times. It is our Leader. Size 23 ft. x 33 ft. 6 in., contains 7 rooms, bath and spacious front porch. Designed with greatest care, using material without waste; therefore can be built so economically it will surprise you. A home of elegant appearance and splendid material. Standard solid construction; no make-shifts of any kind. A beautiful home at a splendid money saving price.

Ask for Free Book of Plans No. 5, B. 96
It explains our Great Building Offer. Tells all about the material, style of solid construction of our houses. Our prices are lower than you can possibly obtain anywhere else.

Our prices include all **BRAND NEW** material needed to build this house, every bit of it, except Masonry, Plumbing, Heating and Painting.

WE MAKE PLANS TO ORDER
Plumbing and Heating Material at a 30 to 50 per cent saving. Our stock is all brand new and first-class. Write for our low prices.

CHICAGO HOUSE WRECKING CO.
35th and Iron Sts., Chicago.

THE BOYS' MAGAZINE FREE!

Send us the names and addresses of 5 boys (from 8 to 15 years old) and we'll send you a copy of this splendid magazine free. Great stories—Beautiful illustrations—Handsome covers in colors. Edited by **WALTER CAMP**. Departments devoted to Electricity, Mechanics, Athletics, Photography, Boy Scouts, Carpentry, Stamps and Coins.

THE SCOTT F. REDFIELD CO.,

217 Main St.,

SMETHPORT, PA.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



FREE 396-Page
BOOK
Send a
Postal



Astonishing Value in Dining-Room Table and Chairs

Think of getting a beautiful 42x42 inch round pedestal extension table and 12 massive carved chairs to match for the phenomenal low price of \$15.00 on credit terms of \$1.00 cash and \$1.00 monthly. The bargain is marvelous. Table extends to 6 ft. length and is made of hardwood, finished in American Quartered Oak; Beautifully Golden Oak Finished Chairs have stout posts and stretchers, middle seats and richly carved top panels.

Price of set complete.....\$15.00
Terms \$1.00 cash, \$1.00 monthly.
Price of table separately.....\$7.75
Terms \$1.00 cash, \$1.00 monthly.
Price of 6 chairs.....6.90
Terms 50c cash, 50c monthly.

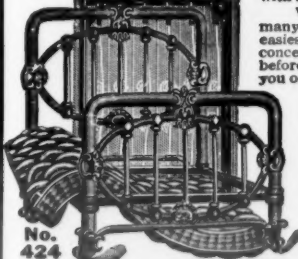
Save 15% to 50% On Home Furnishings

Get our big color illustrated 1913 catalog of 7000 Home Furnishing Bargains by sending your name and address to us on a postal. Everything sent direct to your home, anywhere you live on

Easiest Credit Terms on Record

No interest, no notes, no mortgage, no collections. We treat you right, just as we have treated over 1,000,000 families, our regular customers, this way during our 58 years of easiest home-furnishing history. Take 30 days Free Examination, and use anything you wish to order under our guarantee of money-back, with freight paid by us both ways if not absolutely satisfied.

We are the original easy-credit-payment Home Furnishing Concern. Our many million dollar capital gives us greatest buying power and trusting power on easiest terms at lowest prices—guaranteed lower for equal quality than other concerns can offer. Lower than your local dealer has to pay for his small selection before he adds his profit for you to pay extra. So why not investigate? It costs you only a penny for a postal. Save your money by deciding to find out right way.



Startling Bed Outfit Offer

Just to give you an example of what immense bargains our big catalog contains, we ask you to order this wonderful Complete Bed Outfit consisting of mattress from bed in 4 ft. 6 inch width, soft top mattress with durable bedding and all steel Angle Springs with spiral spring supports. Its equal was never before offered. The bed will be furnished in choice of White, or Pale Green Enamel or in Gold (Vermeil Martin) finish. Price \$8.75 Order it on 30 days free trial.

Terms \$1.00 Cash, 75c monthly

—offered you on credit—including everything in Home Furnishings, Carpets, Rugs, Chairs, Tables, Parlor Sets, Bed Room Sets, Curtains, Ranges, Stoves, Lamps, Baby Carriages, Bedding, Blankets, Bicycles, Clocks, Kitchen Cabinets, Cameras, Dishes and Glassware, Guns, Refrigerators, Sewing Machines, Phonograph Records, Silverware, etc., etc.—in fact everything to make home happier, more comfortable and a better place to live in and enjoy.

Spend a cent or two for postage now and maybe save a month's pay—and more. Such wonderful bargain prices that you'll be astonished. All you need to do is to send us your name and address. Use a postal, or letter. We do the rest—FREE.

Write Us Today ONE YEAR TO PAY

You can take a year or so to pay us in such small amounts that you won't miss the money—yet you'll have what you want and need all the time and get it right away.

Our catalog shows you over 7000 highest quality, latest style, brand new, articles for sale at such small amounts that you won't miss the money—yet you'll have what you want and need all the time and get it right away.



Big Dresser and Chiffonier Bargain

For the first time in history has such quality of dresser with chiffonier to match been offered so low in price. Both pieces are made of solid oak with genuine quartered oak, serpentine shaped fronts, having beautifully carved tops and claw feet, wood handled locks, key and casters. Dresser top measures 36x20 ins. French Bevel Plate Mirror measures 24x20 ins. Chiffonier 36x20 inch top, French Bevel Mirror 24x20 ins. Price each \$11.95

Terms \$1.00 cash, \$1.00 monthly.

Price for both pieces, \$23.90. Terms 90 cash and 90 monthly.

HARTMAN FURNITURE & CARPET CO.
3942 Wentworth Ave., Chicago

Established 1855—58 Years of Success—22 Great Stores—1,000,000 Customers

Largest, oldest and best known home furnishing concern in the world.

Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine

IS A PRODUCT of French science, made largely of aseptic waxes, melted and applied at various degrees of heat from 120 to as high as 215 degrees without burning the skin and retains the heat after the application. 140 degrees kills all germ life. Makes an airtight antiseptic cover for a burnt surface and heals quicker than any other known method. Relieves the pain of inflamed rheumatic joints. Ringworms, carbuncles, felons and any chronic sores usually surrender immediately. Is a clean application and does not stick to or soil the clothes. Easily applied, simply heated and put on with a brush. Used for ten years in all the army and navy stations in France. Many recent testimonials on file and open for inspection.

Our quarter-pound can, with accessories, consisting of brush, cotton and bandages, \$1.00 all sent prepaid for

Pasteur Chemical Co.
98 Beekman St., N. Y. City

February 17, 1913.
PASTEUR CHEMICAL CO.,
98 Beekman St., N. Y.
DEAR SIR: In reply to your letter of January 10, 1913, to my son, who in turn mailed it to me, I wish to say, I have had great success with Thermozine. One box cured a sore about two inches long and an inch wide, which while under the doctor's care grew larger instead of smaller. I am now treating an "open sore" which I have been troubled with for a number of years. Although slow in healing I find great relief. I have recommended Thermozine to a friend of mine, and she also has success with it. Respectfully yours,
MRS. ANDREW BRESNOCK.
155 No. Orchard Street,
Wallingford, Conn.



Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine
Thermozine



The Winged Message

Noah's messenger was a dove. In Solomon's time, pigeons were trained to carry messages. Brutus used them at the siege of Modena. They served the Turks in their fights against the Crusaders. In mediæval wars they were more useful than ever before.

France had a carrier-pigeon mail service, with messages reduced by photography and read through a microscope.

Even today carrier pigeons are utilized as news-bearers in isolated parts of Europe.

In America, the land of the telephone, the carrier pigeon is bred only for racing. The winged word has taken the place of the winged messenger.

Pigeons may fly more than a mile a minute, but the telephone is as quick as speech itself.

The dove is the emblem of peace. The telephone is the instrument of peace. The telephone lines of the Bell System unite a hundred million people in one national family.

**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

One Policy

One System

Universal Service

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

The
Soap
that is
All Soap

Unmixed with Water

Solid Value

Water is cheap. That is why you get so much of it in common toilet soaps.

Pears is all pure soap in every particle, so that although its first cost may be a trifle more than that of the ordinary soap, it lasts so long that its ultimate cost is very much less.

Thus, as a matter of economy alone, it possesses undoubted advantages over the low priced soaps, composed of water and low grade materials which injure the skin.

Other Value

Being waterless, Pears never dries up—never shrinks. It remains hard all through, in any climate, and will wear as thin as a sixpence.

Another point of value is that being of such purity and efficacy in every particle, a very little of it gives a sufficient profusion of lather for toilet or bath, while in regard to cleansing and beautifying properties, there is nothing in the whole range of saponaceous products to equal Pears, which is matchless for the complexion.

Pears' Soap

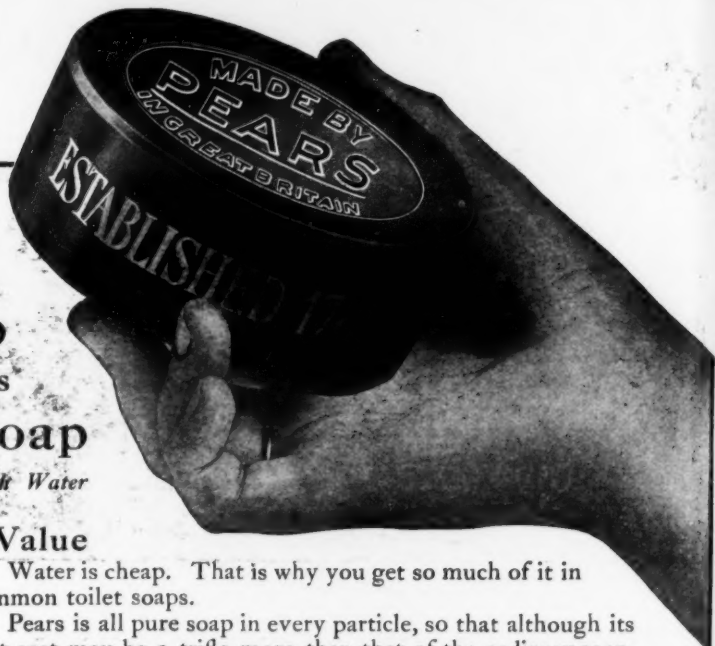
The Soap That Lasts Twice as Long as Ordinary Soaps

"All rights secured."

THE GREAT ENGLISH COMPLEXION SOAP

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEAR'S OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



Says
"Getting r
says Hun
Indian - s
smoke." Y
ing terms
you'll wis
funny as
that tells
this page
cheerfulle
Just brim
happiness
It's a real
—with ear
years' ser
that just
some mor
and late!"

P. A. i
toppy
5c

"P. A." makes men want to smoke a jimmy pipe



Says "Hunch:"

"Getting right down to it," says Hunch, "P. A. is the Indian sign for 'big smoke.' You get on speaking terms with P. A. and you'll wish you had a jimmy as big as the one that tells its own story on this page. It's about the cheerfulness I ever hit. Just brimful of solace and happiness and content. It's a real dog—a bent bull—with ear marks of ten years' service and flavor that just draws you to some more P. A. early and late!"

P. A. in the
toppy red bag

5c



Buy
Prince
Albert
everywhere
in the toppy
red bag, 5c; in
the tidy red tin,
10c; also in hand-
some pound and half-
pound humidor.

1st. Prince Albert won't bite *your* tongue, or any other man's. Can't! Bite's cut out by the patented process that makes P. A. different from any tobacco ever produced.

2d. Prince Albert is crimp cut—*ready* to be tucked away in your old jimmy pipe, or rolled into the bulkiest cigarette you ever hooked a match to, *bar none!*

3d. Prince Albert is fresh and clean—just as it leaves our factory. In the 5c toppy red bag and the 10c tidy red tin P. A. is dust-proof—weather-proof—and freshness and fragrance and sweetness assured! You *compare*

PRINCE ALBERT

the national joy smoke

with any other tobacco you ever smoked, *no matter what it cost!* The answer is: P. A.'s "the goods"—delicious from the first fire-up down to the sweetest "heel" you ever took a pull at!

R. J. REYNOLDS
TOBACCO CO.,
Winston-Salem, N. C.



**Every Educated Physician
Will Tell You Upon Inquiry**

That the soft gray filling of the nerve centres, including the brain, is made up of water, albumen and Phosphate of Potash, as the largest ingredients —

And that when the nerve centres are rebuilt every day as fast as worn by use, the individual is equipped to keep well.

Grape=Nuts

FOOD

Was specially designed to provide nutrition for both body and brain. It is rich in Phosphate of Potash, the vital salt of gray nerve tissue, often lacking in the usual diet.

A dish of Grape-Nuts and cream regularly for breakfast will show

“There’s a Reason”